KASHMIR POLITICS AND
IMPERIALIST MANOEUVRES
1846-1980
N.N.RAINA

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Dedication

To the memory of
Late Dr. Kanwar Mohammad Ashraf
Freedom Fighter, Scholar, and Revolutionary.
A Pioneer who built bridges between the
Jammu and Kashmir National Movement
and the Peoples' Movement
in the rest of the Sub-continent.

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(1846—1930)

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Preface

The book presented here is a modest offering from one whose perceptions were conditioned for nearly two decades by close interaction with events that took place before or soon after the British were forced to withdraw their rule from the Indian sub-continent. It is primarily intended for those who have grown up after the two dominions of India and Pakistan had been brought into existence by the Mountbatten Award, and an act of the British Parliament.

The author does not presume to teach or to preach anything. He only presents certain facts and observations personally known to him or, more often recorded by people generally accepted to be knowledgeable. The author feels convinced that this presentation will help to understand rationally the main course of events in the Jammu and Kashmir State from the time of its formation to our own day. However, this is only a sketch, a starting point. One hopes that our new intelligentsia in the state will be stimulated to probe deeper into the happenings of this period, and strive to unravel their true significance—not coloured by passion of the moment or blind prejudice, but in relation to the wider reference frame which the present work seeks to outline.

Capitalism was a youthful all conquering force when the British first got control over Northwest India. The empires of the British (who also controlled the Portuguese), French, Dutch, Belgians, Russians, and later Germans, were all expanding relentlessly. They had reason to fear more hostility from each

other than from that of any other major organised power centre of local significance. Their main aim then was to get control over the sources of raw materials, trade routes and open up fresh markets for their own manufactured goods. A new phase started towards the end of the nineteenth century when monopoly capital and its cartels attained dominance in the exploiting mechanism of the capitalist nations. This gave rise to a hectic scramble for the divison of whatever had remained of the land surface of the globe outside their control. Each group of monopolists based in a country had the support of its own national state. These groupings crystallised, at the turn of the century, into two competing military alliance systems who fought the First World War to resolve conflicts between them. An unexpected outcome of this war was the triumph of the October Revolution in Russia which resulted in the exclusion of one-sixth of the global land surface from the operation of the capitalist system, comprising about a 100 nationalities, linguistic and ethnic groups. The power of imperialism also got a severe jolt by the breakup of the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires, the anti-imperialist upsurge in Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, India, Ireland, China and Indonesia. This marks the beginning of the general crisis of capitalism, which has been progressively deepening ever since.

After a short recovery in the twenties the capitalist nations had to face the bleak consequences of the unprecedented depression of 1929-33, which clearly exposed the cancerous sores affliciting the imperialist economic system and its victims in the colonies. A remedy was looked for in fostering fascism with associated brutality, militarism, and nurturing it for an anti-Soviet war. The Second World War precipitated by the Nazis, far from obliterating the new socialist state of the USSR the only shining beacon pointing to the working people of the world the way of deliverance from the regime of exploitation, uncertainty, and violence fostered byi mperialism—resulted in a shattering defeat for fascism. Soviet Union paid a price never before paid by any other nation in history, but emerged as the second most powerful state in the world. A community of nearly a dozen socialist states also came into existence,

spread in three continents. Today ten socialist states of the CMEA contribute one-third of the industrial output of the world, about one-fourth of new patents registered, and a quarter of the national income generated. It has attained parity with the imperialist NATO military alliance in its defence capability. The old empires of Britain, France, Holland(Dutch) Belgium, Portugal, and Germany have disintegrated. Consequently, over 100 new national sovereign states have come into existence. Most of these are organised in the nonaligned movement, working for world peace, disarmament, and New International Economic Order.

The camp of imperialism, headed by the United States of America, not having a single constructive idea to meet this situation, has adopted a feverish programme of piling up nuclear and other arms, with a view to turn back the liberation wave by nucler blackmail and bluster. "Neoglobism" is the name for this shameless policy of intervention every where to make the world safe for exploiters of all sorts and the depradations of a thousand odd Transnational Corporations which today sap the life blood of the whole world outside the socialist community. Manipulation of terms of trade, military pressure, and more recently 'debt-traps' are among their armoury to hold nations to ransom. As a reaction to these policies a demand for a New International Economic Or der, disarmament, and peace, is fast gaining strength making the imperialists still more vicious and reckless with each passing day. Apart from flaunting their dollars, the nuclear armoury and the iron fist the imperialists also make a wide use of guile, treachery, murder, disinformation and other devious ways to get their victims entangled in a web of lies sustained by corruption, chauvinism, fanaticism, ignorance and blind prejudice. All this and much more is done to divest people from the path of struggle for their own emancipation and well being. Exploiters of all hues, including the home-grown ones, are the beneficiaries of these operations. With the deepening of its crisis imperialism has become more reckeless, risking even the very survival of the human race on the principle : "After me the Deluge". This makes it urgent for every sane

person to grasp the full significance of our local issues in their wider global context, and thereby safeguard our true interests more effectively. This work is intended to help in carrying out this task in our state.

In writing about the State of Jammu and Kashmir the author has not made any attempt to assess the role of individuals. That would naturally make it difficult to avoid altogether the subjective element. This book is certainly not a detailed history of the period that it covers. Those interested will have to study the autobiographies of Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah and Syed Mir Qasim, the wirtings of Moulana Syed Masoodi, Mohammed Yusuf Saraf, Abdul Rashid Taseer, Prem Nath Bazar, Peer Afzal Makhdoomi, P.N. Bamzai and Dr. R.K. Parimoo. One should also mention a dozen doctoral dissertations submitt ed by young scholars at the Jawaharlal Nehru University and University of Kashmir for M. Phil and Ph. D. degree.

A detailed investigation of all the interconnections of events and personalities within the frame-work outlined here needs painstaking efforts and a fresh mind. Our young scholars owe it to themselves, and our people, to put in the hard work that is needed to carry out such an undertaking. They are the beneficiaries of the relative freedom and material progress of recent years. But the dream of 'New Kashmir' remains unrealised, and still needs considerable effort to attain it. The gains already made are not, however, insignificant either.

125, Narsingh Garh
Srinagar, Kashmir
November 25, 1987

N.N. RAINA

PART I

Before the Awakening

(1846-1930)

1. Founding of the Jammu and Kashmir State

It was the 16th of March, 1846. The occasion was the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar. The treaty formalised the creation of a new state of Jammu and Kashmir, the British government having "transferred and made over for ever in independent possession" to "Raja Mian Gulab Singh and heirs male of his body, the territory" which included Kashmir and Jammu. An eye-witness to the scene noted that while the Raja was being formally invested with the title of Maharaja at Amritsar, he "stood up, and with joined hands expressed his gratitude to the British Viceroy—adding, however, without any ironical meaning that he was indeed his *Zar-khureed* or gold-bought slave."

But this would suggest that the British paid cash for Gulab Singh's allegiance. It was quite the reverse. It was Mian Gulab Singh who paid seventyfive lakh *Nanakshahi* rupees—equivalent of £750,000 those days—for his new territory.

Many years later the liberal, Sir Edward E. Meakin, speaking in East India Association in 1889, commented :

> "It was clearly wrong for the East India Company to cede Kashmir to Gulab Singh for £ 750,000 when it was not a possession of theirs, and they had no manner of right to deal with it, but 'a bargain is a bargain'. The East India Company took the money and left Gulab Singh to annexe Kashmir if he could. He did annexe it, and was duly acknowledged as its Sovereign".

An Englishman, Frederic Drew, who spent his many valuable years about that time, serving the Raj in those hilly

regions, has explained this event in these words :

> "One great objective which the Governor-General had in view when he made this arrangement for the Jammu and Kashmir territories, was to lessen the force of the Sikhs by establishing on their flanks a power independent of them and inclined to the British. This objective may be said to have so far succeeded that, on the next and final trial of strength between the Sikhs and the British, two or three years later, Gulab Singh's aid was withheld from the nation to which formally belonged his allegiance."

This analysi s of his motives is confirmed by Sir Henry Hardinge, the Viceroy, himself. Writing to Queen Victoria, he observed that it seemed to him necessary "to weaken the Sikh State, which has proved itself too strong...", and to show "to all Asia that although the British Government has not deemed it expedient to annexe this immense country of the Punjab, making the Indus the British boundary, it has punished the treachery (sic) and violence (sic) of the Sikh nation, and exhibited its power in a manner which cannot be misunderstood." With greater candour and less formal tone, Hardinge wrote in a private letter :

> "It was necessary last March to weaken the Sikhs by depriving them of Kashmir. The distance from Sutlej to Kashmir is 300 miles of very difficult mountainous country quite impracticable for six months. To keep a British force 300 miles away from any possibility of support would have been an undertaking that merited a strait coat and not a peerage. The arrangement made was the only alternative".

Further elucidation was provided by him in an official document dated March 14, 1846 :

> "(Kashmir's) occupation by us would be, on many accounts, disadvantageous. It would bring us into collision with many powerful chiefs for whose coercion a large military establishment at a great distance from our provinces and military resources would be necessary. It would more than double the extent of our frontier in countries available at every point, and most difficult to

defend without any corresponding advantage for such large addition of territory."

But how did the choice fall on Mian Gulab Singh as the most suitable candidate for the *gadi* ?

Mian Gulab Singh and his brother Dhyan Singh were two Mian Rajput adventurers from Dugar Desh who entered the service of the Sikh Durbar at a tender age, and rose to high positions there. Gulab Singh was subsequently recognised by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh as Raja of Jammu. His remarkable capacities are evident from the successful war his army fought in the Tibet region and the Treaty of Friendship concluded by him "with China and Lhasa in 1842, on Second of Assuj 1899" (about mid-August 1842). It is an unusual document in modern Indian history. An excerpt is being reproduced here :

"(Parties).. swear before God that the friendship between Raja Gulab Singh and the Emperor of China and the Lama Guru Sahib Lassawala, will be kept and observed till eternity; no disregard will be shown to anything agreed upon in the presence of God, and we will have nothing to do with the countries bordering on the frontier of Ladak. We will carry on trade in shawl, pasham and tea as before by way of Ladak, and if any of Shri Raja's enemies comes to our territories and says anything against the Raja we will not listen to him and will not allow him to remain in our country, and whatever traders come from Ladak shall experience no difficulty from our side. We will not act otherwise but in the same manner as it has been prescribed in this meeting regarding the fixing of Ladak frontier and the keeping open of the road for the traffic in shawl, pasham and tea. We will observe our pledge to God Gaitri and Pasi."

While this unusual event in our frontier history of the nineteenth century was taking place the British already had their eye on Mian Gulab Singh. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh had become Master of the Punjab by 1823, and even captured Peshawar in 1830. The British were aiming at opening up Central Asia to British commerce through the navigation of the Indus. They signed a treaty with the Sindh Amirs in

April 1832, binding the parties "never to look with the eye of covetousness upon the possessions of each other." But by 1843, the British managed to annex Sindh. The pretext the British found for breaking the treaty was that the *Amirs* had violated the terms of the treaty by obstructing the British supply routes during the Afghan compaign of 1839-42.

What justification did the British have for launching a war against the distant Afghanistan ? The British imperialists have never lacked 'honourable' motives for committing the most heinous deeds. In fact Governor General (Auckland) tried to reason it out with Dost Mohammad, the Amir of Kabul in this manner :

> "To your enlightened mind it cannot fail to be obvious, that commerce is the basis of all national prosperity, and that it is commerce alone that enables people of one country to exchange its superfluous commodities for those of another, to accumulate wealth and enjoy all the comforts and blessings of civilised life."

It was too much to expect simple Afghans to understand these subtle arguments. A confrontation became inevitable. After all the wise Lord Salisbury had sagely, some would say cynically, opined : "The frontier wars are but the surf that marks the edge and the advance of the wave of civilization." On Oct. 1, 1838 a war was declared against Afghanistan.

It was during the course of this war (1839-1842) that Gulab Singh, who represented the Sikh Empire at Peshawar, availed of an opportunity to win the British favour. That was in 1841 when the British had been cornered by Afghan resistance to the invasion. Sir Henry Lawrence informs us :

> "(Gulab Singh) knew well enough that the Lahore Authorities were not in any way anxious to help the British in their Kabul expedition. Gulab Singh realized the full strength of his position—namely that if effective help could be rendered to the British through his influence and authority then their friendship towards him would be assured."

The help that Mian Gulab Singh rendered to the British enabled Gen. Pollock to enter the Khyber Pass on April 5,

1842. A few days later "the great Bazaar at Kabul was blown up with gun powder, to fix a stigma upon the City."

The British were quick to acknowledge a good turn. On April 8, 1842 a *Kharita* from the British Government to Gulab Singh acknowledged : "We learned from the Chiefs of our army how wisely you planned for the help of our troops and how kindly you rendered this to them...The fruit of a long sown seed of friendship between us which was concealed for a long time has now come to light...We remember your troubles and difficulties in rendering help to our army. We shall never forget that." Even before this Sir Walter Lawrence had written to Clark, the British government Agent at Lahore :

> "If Gulab Singh assists the British efficiently they should assist him to get possession of the Valley of Jalalabad and endeavour to make some arrangement to secure it and Peshawar to his family."

This was certainly premature, like skinning a live bear. Not long after, the Afghans, in one fell swoop annihilated all the British forces in Afghanistan. Only a lone doctor (Dr. Boyd ?) was left to carry the woeful tale to Peshawar.

The British did not, however, forget Gulab Singh, and his possible use to them in the future. On February 14, 1844 Lord Ellenborough, the Viceroy, wrote to Queen Victoria :

> "In the hills Raja Gulab Singh is extending his power with his usual unscrupulous disregard of the rights of others and of the supremacy of the state he pretends to serve. This conduct, however, makes him very odious to the Sikhs at Lahore."

With all this Gulab Singh was regarded as an elder statesman in the Sikh Empire. After Ranjeet Singh's death (1844 ?) when the Sikh Empire was caught in a civil war Gulab Singh was invited to take over as Dewan. His brother, Dhyan Singh, managed to win the confidence of the contending factions. While the feud took a bitter turn the British were threatening the Sikh Empire from across the Sutlej river.

On February 20, 1845, Lord Hardinge wrote to Lord Ellenborough : "Gulab Singh has again written to us, delighted to enter into terms with us...The Raja has now sent us a letter entreating us to lose no time."

"The Raja had arrived at Lahore with a large body of his own hill troops in whom he could place implicit reliance. He persuaded the Durbar to allow himself to garrison the fortress at Lahore with these men while the Sikhs then occupying it were ordered to proceed to join their brethren on the Sutlej...Gulab Singh urged the army not to attempt attacking the British until he joined them, and this he evaded doing on one pretext or another, knowing full well that in due time the British would attack and capture the position at Subraon."

On February 3, 1846 Sir Henry Lawrence sent a message to Raja Gulab Singh that he wanted to communicate to him "a word which will be to your utmost good..." The English intimated to Gulab Singh their readiness to ackowledge "a Sikh sovereignty in Lahore after the army should have been disbanded, but the Raja declared his inability to deal with the troops...the views of either party were in some sort met by an understanding that the Sikh army should be attacked by the English and that, when beaten, it should openly be disowned by its own government and, further, that the passage of the Sutlej should be unopposed, and the road to the capital laid open to the victors."

William Edwards records :

"Had they (Sikhs) advanced during the night the results must have been very disastrous for us, as our European regiments were very much reduced in number, and our ammunition, both for artillery and small arms, almost expended. It was inexplicable at the time to us why this fresh army had failed to advance and reinforce their comrades. Subsequently at Lahore, however, I was informed that their leaders had restrained the men on the pretext that the day was inauspicious for a battle, it by no means being the intention of the Regency that their troops should be successful, but, on the contrary, be destroyed by the British, so as to get rid of them for ever."

Dewan Kirpa Ram, Gulab Singh's official biographer records in *Gulabnama* that in the midst of the battle (Subraon?) Sir Walter Lawrence took Gulab Singh aside for a private

conversation ..and promised that the province of Kashmir and other adjoining "districts, after being severed from the Sikh Empire, would be granted to him in independent possession..."

The creation of Jammu and Kashmir State under Maharaja Gulab Singh is thus seen to be a major stroke of the British Imperial power to subjugate the Punjab and consolidate their hold on the Indian subcontinent.

2. Early British Probings

The Treaty of Amritsar recognised Maharaja Gulab Singh in "independent possession" of Kashmir and adjoining territories. All the same it did not take the British long before they started re-interpreting the contents of this "independence". Their main purpose of creating the state was basically served only in three years when they completely routed the Sikh Army at Chilianwala on March 29, 1849. But, even before this was achieved, and the Punjab was annexed, as early as the summer of 1847, the British charged the Maharaja of having inflicted severe hardships on his subjects, which needed looking into. Sir Henry Lawrence was asked to investigate the complaints. The complaints referred to had been concocted. But they did provide an occasion for warning the Maharaja that "tyranny would not be permitted in Kashmir." Hardinge wrote in 1848 :

> "In no case will the British government be the blind instrument of a Ruler's injustice towards his people, and if, in spite of friendly warning, the evil of which the British government may have just cause to complain be not corrected, a system of direct interference must be resorted to, which as Your Highness must be aware, would lower the dignity and curtail the independence of the Ruler."

However, long before the Treaty of Amritsar came into force Dr. Wolf, a missionary, had recorded some of the British expectations from the possession of Kashmir, in these words :

"This will not only lead to the costly product of its looms (shawl) being (our own but to the diffusion of the Gospel

of Christ among the dense population inhabiting the loveliest valley upon earth, Cashmere. From thence it would spread into Tibet, Cashgar, Turkestan and Chinese Tartary ....I would like to see whole colonies of English artists, men of science and literature and divines, proceeding to Cashmere."

Robert Clark, the first missionary to come to the Valley wrote :

"The Valley is remarkably fitted by its geographical position, by its salubrious climate, and by its beauty and fertility to become a great Missionary Centre for the vast countries of Tibet, China, Yarkand, Afghanistan and Turkestan, which lie around it."

A medical practitioner John Ince recorded :

"Whatever may have been its former history Cashmere is now undoubtedly a very fine province. It possesses a delicious climate admirably adapted to the European constitution ; its soil is exceedingly rich, fertile, and under skilful cultivation and an enlightened government there is no reason why the Vale of Cashmere should not maintain its reputation as one of the fairest spots on the earth's surface."

The same viewpoint was echoed by pious Mr. Brinkman :

"If properly ruled Cashmere would pay us ten times over, and far more than any other spot in India does. The country would pay as a sanitorium the force to keep it in order..."

Later the intelligence officer E.F. Knight was to write :

"The climate of this Paradise of Asia appears to be well adapted to the European constitution. The few English children who have been born and brought up here are so strong and rosy cheeked as if they have been bred at home; while there is no necessity for their leaving the country when they have attained a certain age, the separation between parents and children, which forms for our people the great drawback to an Indian career being quite avoidable in Kashmir. Had we not sold this magnificent country a great military cantonment would no doubt have long since established here. This would not only have been most advantageous from a strategical point of view but would have

avoided much of the sickness and mortality which thin the ranks of our white army in India."

An Anglo-Indian publication the *Scinde News* observed :

"We join in the hope that the day is coming near when our troops will be stationed at the sanitorium of Cashmere when European colonists will, by their industry and bravery, make it a truly happy valley."

Other voices among the Anglo-Indian circles adopted a more strident tone :

"(Amritsar Treaty) next to Cabul disaster (i.e., first Afghan War), this is the greatest blot in our history."

"Until Cashmere is ours it will be a sharp thorn in our side." "A republican form of government in Cashmere would be much better if the British do not want it. But why should they not want it ? Oh, I long to see the day when Cashmere shall bloom like a rose under the British government."

There was, however, an unexpected corrective to this deep heart-burning in the situation created by the mass upheaval in the North India, triggered by the break-out of Mutiny in 1857. The British got a shaking and needed friends. Maharaja Gulab Singh as well as Ranbir Singh were also anxious not to lose the confidence of the British. Gulab Singh offered help to the British, and this was implemented by his son, who ascended the throne about this time. He sent a contingent of troops and artillery to help the British to suppress the insurrection. He refused even to draw the rations for his troops from the British. He would not even accept territory offered to him by way of compensation for all the expense undergone by the state by participation in this sanguinary campaign. This was Ranbir Singh's way of demonstrating his "pride in helping the British out of sheer loyalty and goodwill". By way of *quid pro quo* he was, however, glad to have a *sanad* issued to him by Lord Canning, the Viceroy. It provided for a right to adopt an heir by Ranbir Singh and his successors to perpetuate their dynastic rule in case of failure of issue. This was a 'magnanimous gesture' by the British to show their deep appreciation of the services rendered by Ranbir Singh. The promise, however,

was not kept when Pratap Singh wanted to adopt an heir of his own choice, early in the twentieth century.

The British Imperial government no doubt received a serious shaking by the insurrection of 1857. They were quick to resassure the Indian princes that their thrones were safe under their protection. Through her Proclamation of 1858 Queen Victoria declared :

"We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions, and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions, or our rights, to be attempted with impunity, we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others. We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of native princes as our own, and we desire that they, as well as our own subjects should enjoy that prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government. We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects...." The declaration did provide some respite to the Maharaja's rule in Kashmir. Demands for annexation of Kashmir also were suitably modified. The Anglo-Indian journal, *Delhi Gazette* observed :

"We do not advocate annexation but we do affirm that a military occupation of Cashmere has now become in our own self-defence, an actual necessity." Some times the demands were pitched very low indeed. Reverend Brinkmann, for one, ruefully complained : "We have not a foot of land wherein to bury our dead, that the Raja will not even allow us to keep and consecrate an acre of land wherein to bury officers who die. No woman under any pretext is allowed to pass out of the country.."

And then the hysterical cry :

"Heaven seize thee ruthless king!"

The British churchmen appear to have hoped for great success in proselytising activity in Kashmir, presumably because of the widespread poverty of the people. In fact they regarded it not only a possibility but necessary for a stable rule. Says Brinkmann :

"Those who keep calling us to educate the natives (to do without teaching Christianity is simply digging away the ground under our own feet) ought to cry: "Annex Cashmere".

Much jubilation appears to have taken place in the British community in Srinagar when in the 1860s one Mohammed Hussan, a "young man of respectable family, and a Syed" was baptised It evoked much hostility among the people. The boy was rescued by the British Agent in Srinagar. Four others who were claimed also to have got converted to Christianity also were sent away to the Punjab. With all this the illusion that "Cashmere may become the focus of Christianity in Asia, the centre of a religion as pure as the eternal snow around it" survived many disappointments.

It is curious that the missionaries of the Church Mission Society in Kashmir were not confident that the message of Jesus was itself sufficiently potent to win over the Kashmiris. Brinkmann, who made much of the fact that Kashmiri Mussalmans called the British *Garib Parwar* and so were obviously anxious to take shelter under their protective umbrella still believed that force could not be dispensed with :

> "The natives of India do not yet obey us for love; it is not their affection for us, their rulers, which prevents their trying to turn us out of India. It is the prestige attached to the British bower throughout the world, the belief that though we are infidels or unclean yet that they cannot stand against us in battle array successfully; the knowledge that when we consider ourselves insulted that satisfaction is at once demanded, and if not obtained, that we take it by force of arms, whether the offender be powerful or weak. It is these ideas of us that keep the Mussalman, the Hindoo and the Sikh, from rising against us, if they wished to do so...If India ever becomes Christian, perhaps we may trust more to gratitude among the people for the advantages bestowed by our rule over them; but for a very long time we must be content to feel ourselves obeyed simply because we are the strongest."

Through their success in the Crimean War against the Russian Empire the British succeeded in shutting it from

approaches to the Mediterranean. During the mid-sixties of the nineteenth century the Russian power started to move towards Central Asia. This provided a new strength to the demand for the annexation of Kashmir by the British. A correspondent of the Anglo-Indian journal *Delhi Gazette* wrote in bitterness :

> "Our highly civilised government looks on with cold indifference to the advance of Russia from the north, with cold and unimpassioned indifference to the dastardly and demoralising government of the fairest valley in the east; and to the confusion and war, and rapine among a nation second to none for bravery in our Indian possession..."

Another Anglo-Indian paper observed :

> "The key of India is as much Kabul as Cashmere, and whilst we should render the rulers of the former country subservient to our interests, we ought without any delay annex the latter. Expediency, the Maharaja's misgovernment and his flagrant breach of treaty, justify, and in the interests of humanity and statesmanship demand such an annexation"

Yet another Anglo-Indian paper shrieked :

> "Steadily the wave from the North advances, and when England awakens to the fact too late it will resent the policy which is now so dear to men with whom statesmanship means a financial surplus, and England's honour is less valued than party jobbery. We have come to this, that we leave intervention in Central Asia to our feudatory Cashmere, and that intervention is against our interests and contrary to his engagement with us".

It is not clear what inspired the angry comment about the "feudatory" in the preceding para. But one might think of a situation that arose in November, 1876 (Nov. 17 and 18, 1876) to which such a comment could conceivably apply. What happened was that the Viceroy Lord Lytton received Maharaj Ranbir Singh at Madhopur in the Punjab, and proposed that in view of the political developments across the northern frontiers the Government of India desired that "such states as Chitral and Yassin should come under the control of a friend

and an ally of the British government like His Highness, rather than be absorbed in the course of events by powers inimical to Cashmere". This was a new policy in contrast to the earlier 'Sialkot policy' of restricting the extension of Kashmir's influence. Gilgit Agency was established in July 1877 with the appointment of Capt. Biddulph as the Political Officer at Gilgit. In 1881, the Agency was withdrawn because of a new foothold in Jalalabad, and on May 11 the Maharaja was instructed : "His Highness should maintain his influence unimpaired over the frontier chiefs."

3. Economic Opening-up

During the nineteenth century British economic interest in overseas colonies, apart from open loot, was primarily in extending trade. They needed new sources of cheap raw materials, and market for their manufactures. Incidentally it involved destruction of local handicrafts in the colonies and increase of pressure on the land. It was only towards the end of the century, say after 1880, that the main interest shifted to safe investment for super-profits, and not merely exchange of commodities, i.e., the 'imperialist phase' properly speaking. Naturally, as soon as Kashmir came under their suzerainty they did not allow grass to grow under their feet, and started intensive studies of various possibilities.

A team of doctors visited Ladakh area in 1856. In 1866 Survey-General of India started systematic survey of the frontier area. Church Mission Society sent its first contingent in 1867 to Srinagar. Moorecroft had been studying the shawl industry—in fact the whole economy of the state—even in the early twenties. Frederic Drew was already entrenched in Leh. A postal service via Bannehal and Murree was operational by 1866. The Kohala bridge over the Jhelum was built in 1870, connecting Murree with the Valley. By 1882 a telegraph line connecting Murree, summer headquarters of the British Western Military Command, with Srinagar, was being extended to Gilgit. State Government postal and telegraph offices were taken over in 1894 and 1896 respectively, thus gaining complete control over the telecommunications in the state.

In 1863, Egerton, D.C. of Kangra (Punjab) produced a trade report for the Viceroy. He made out that the annual trade between the Indian sub-continent and Central Asia amounted to £621,918 per annum via Afghanistan and £633,604 via J & K route. In his opinion the trade through the state should have been substantially larger than that following the Afghanistan route. "The route through J & K is shorter". Also, the Afghan route goes through areas inhabited by "wild tribes indulging habitually in bloody disorder". The reason for this anomaly, in his opinion, was the existence of "the noiseless malpractices of feudatory government."

A specific grievance against the state government that the British had was the maintenance of two great monopolies. The state had a monopoly of shawl trade, so that the foreigners could not deal direct with the weavers. The state also held a monopoly in the import of *paschim*, the type of wool used in making shawls, and coming from the Tibetan plateau. The Maharaja by "interdicting absolutely the passage of shawl wool of Yarkand" is able to prevent the produce of Chanthan from reaching the British territory. "If he supplied himself with Yarkand pashm he could not have prevented the produce of Chanthan from finding its way to Noorpoor and Umritsar, whereas with the co-operation of the Tibetans he can and does exclude the wool of Yarkand." Further : "The influence of the Maharaja of Cashmere, partly from old-established commercial intercourse, and partly from his generally having an imposing military force on the frontier, while hardly a British police constable has been seen there, is quite paramount, and quite eclipses ours...."

In 1863 the Maharaja was forced to enter into a trade agreement by the British regarding the payment of export and import duties on articles of merchandise which came to the Punjab via Kuloo. Dr. Caylay had been placed at Leh as the special agent of the Governor General, and to all appearances he supervised trade relations of the British with Turkistan. He did, in fact, make a detailed survey of the Central Asian market. At his suggestion the Maharaja was forced to abolish all levies and duties on British goods by the state. W.L. Johnson was then sent to Central Asia. He reached Khotan in

the summer of 1865 to give a fillip to British trade with Central Asia.

The British had already posted Frederic Drew in Ladakh, who also controlled espionage in the area. He was joined by Col. Elphinston while Wilson and other officers were there, supposedly surveying the frontier. A British Joint Commissioner in Ladakh was formally appointed in April 1867—"to secure information on all occurrences in Tibet and Turkistan..." All this alarmed the Maharaja, who thought the British could have got all the information they needed by posting an officer at Spiti. He also complained of having lost fifteen lakhs per annum in revenue from levies on trade. But the Viceroy ignored all these objections. The Maharaja had to conclude a treaty with Forsyth in May, 1870, for which negotiations had been started by Capt. Grey, a Special Envoy of the Governor General, in November 1869.

The treaty provided for a survey of all routes used for trade with Central Asia. After investigation, one of these routes was to be designated "a free highway in perpetuity for all travellers and traders." Two Joint Commissioners, one from the J & K., and the other appointed by the Government of India, were to supervise the route, settle disputes and exercise jurisdiction within a defined limit on each side of the chosen road. There was a provision for independent agents to make available means of transport. Supply deposits and rest-houses were to be arranged by the Joint Commissioners. The Maharaja agreed to levy no transit duties on the free highway, and on sealed goods passing through Kashmir. For this he was compensated by the refund of all import duty on goods thus transmitted "in bond" through the Indian territory to Kashmir and Eastern Turkistan. Rules were framed for the guidance of the Commissioners. Fixed sums were specified for road maintenance.

Early in 1873 Sir Thomas Douglas Forsyth accompanied by Capt. Biddulph and Capt. Torter were deputed to go to Yarkand. They were received at Kohala bridge, transported to Srinagar, and a retinue of 2000 horses, 7000 coolies, with all supplies provided by the State Government for their Yarkand journey. Forsyth entered into a trade agreement

with the *Amirs* of Yarkand and Kashgar on Feb. 2, 1874, and secured concessions for the import of British products into Central Asia. This treaty wiped off all the influence the Maharaja had in Central Asia. He got a present of a small steam boat from Queen Victoria, which could be seen on the Jhelum near Shergarhi for decades afterwards.

The new system did give a fillip to Central Asian trade until the collapse of Yaqub Beg's kingdom in Kashgar area, eight years later.

In 1873 Robert Shaw, the British representative at Kashgar was ecstatic about "the hopeful possibilities of trade with the, sixty million tea-drinking, cotton-wearing inhabitants of China's western provinces, right upto the Great Wall itself." But Dalgeish, the only Briton personally engaged in trade at Kashgar was murdered on the Karakoram in 1888. This dealt a severe blow to the British trade with Central Asia.

Clearly the British had no difficulty in securing the Maharaja's acquiescence in extending trade with Central Asia. As regards the shawl trade, the available markets for Kashmir shawls were in France and the Russian Empire. French traders had direct contact with manufacturers in Kashmir, which the British made it difficult for them to maintain once they achieved a dominant voice in Kashmir affairs. The Russians had no such contacts, and had access to Kashmir goods only in Yarkand, Kashgar or Kabul, which became precarious with the British Imperial Frontier policy of shunning the Russians after their subjugation of the Punjab. The main interest of the British was *Pashim*, the special wool used in making shawls, having a flourishing woollen textile industry of their own. It is a notable fact that under the Treaty of Amritsar the Maharaja was required to present annually to the British government "one horse, twelve shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female)". This is because they wanted to rear these goats in U.K. or elsewhere in their empire.

The experiments did not succeed : The *Pashim* goat needs an altitude of over 14,000 feet above sea level. Also, spinning machinery could not spin it—the separation of hair from wool involves tedious, back-breaking labour and is very time consuming. Almost all women in Kashmir had been doing this

in their homes for centuries from a very young age. So it was not useful to them as a raw-material for their spinning and weaving industry. They also tried to corner foreign marketing of shawls by starting auctioning in London. This also did not succeed as an industry for producing spurious Kashmir shawls, (e.g., Paisley shawls) suddenly flourished on the Continental Europe. The result was that an industry in which about 30,000 weavers were involved in the Valley in 1865 (about 40,000 shawl looms during Mogul times) and several lakhs indirectly—involved in sorting, carding, spinning...about 5 lakhs ; in 1865, export income estimated was £254,496 in foreign exchange)—was dead and gone by 1880. As an alibi the British invented the hoax that the Franco-German War of 1870 was responsible for killing the export trade in Kashmir shawl. Incidentally, the misery caused by the collapse of the industry in the Valley was diverted towards the outbreak of *Shia-Sunni* riots in Srinagar by the usual police techniques of provocation and incitement.

The flourishing of British trade with Central Asia through the J & K State did not evoke any manifest adverse reaction from the Russian Empire. In fact an Englishman (Robert) Thorpe, who spent several years in Kashmir during the sixties, and died there, wrote :

> "It is to be hoped that our relations with Russia will be those of peace, not war ; and that we shall at no distant period, co-operate with her in spreading the blessings of civilisation and settled government among oppressed peoples and savage tribes."

In December, 1866, the *Calcutta Review*, an Anglo-Indian journal, reproduced an article from some Russian source, suggesting immense possibilities of extended co-operation for expanding Anglo-Russian trade in the Central Asian region. The article goes on :

> "An amicable division between Russia and England is quite practicable. What has not been conquered by one power might, without any opposition, be conquered by the other, more especially as the advantages of such acquisition are contested by many.

"We even do not see any reason for dissatisfaction in the possibility of a Central Asiatic frontier soon forming the boundary of the Anglo-Indian empire. Such a frontier would, at all events determine the commercial fields for the disposal of English and Russian production and would considerably weaken, if not altogether remove, all dangerous rivalry, and that the sale under such circumstances of English and Russian producers would rapidly increase, is evident. The chief obstacles to trade in this region are the incessant depredations and rapacious exactions made by petty Asiatic despots.

"All these drawbacks must at once disappear under English and Russian rule, and then an interchange of commodities will freely take place.

"The expansion of the frontier to a mutual point of contact between English and Russian territory, will not only decrease the chances of collision between Russia and England but also conduce to amity and a feeling of friendship between those countries, seeing more especially that a conflict between them would be disadvantageous to both, and only lead to mutual losses."

4. The Russian Factor

It has already been mentioned in Chapter II that after a set-back in the Crimean War, which kept it away from the Mediterranean the Russian power started moving towards Central Asia in the mid-sixties of the last century. In 1864 the Russian Imperial Chancellor, Gorchakov, produced a memorandum in which he expanded his philosophy of expansionism without inhibitions. According to his apologia "civilized states in contact with half-savage wandering tribes" are compelled to indulge in expensive repression, and thereby drawn into a course wherein "ambition plays a smaller part than imperious necessity, and where the greatest difficulty is in knowing where to stop."

As stated already Britain had succeeded, with the help of the Ottoman Empire, in keeping Russia away from the Mediterranean—the life-line of their Empire in the East. This led Russia to extend its influence in Persia and Central Asia. Amir Sher Ali of Afghanistan came to India and met Lord Mayo, the Viceroy at Ambala in 1869. The British were not very forthcoming. What Mayo offered was "warm countenance and support, discouragement of his rivals, such material assistance as we may deem absolutely necessary for his immediate and friendly communication through the Commissioner of Peshawar end a native agent at Kabul—a British citizen not being acceptable—he on his part undertaking to do all he can to maintain peace over frontier and comply with all wishes in the matter of trade."

(John) Lawernce had formulated a frontier policy in a Minute dated November 25, 1868. His recommendation was "to endeavour to come to some mutual understanding with Russia and failing that we might give that power to understand that an advance towards India beyond a certain point would entail war in all parts of the world with England." In his view the Indus river formed a proper defensible frontier for India. This understanding was often compatible with the foreign policy of the Liberals headed by Gladstone.

In 1865 the Russian Imperial Army occupied Tashkhend and Khokand in Central Asia, followed by Samarkand in 1868 After this Russian chancellor Gorchakov suggested that Afghanistan be recognized as a neutral zone between the two empires. But Mayo emphasized to Lord Clarendon that the security of India could be based on a strong, united and friendly Afghanistan, and not on Russia enjoying an equal status with Britain at the Kabul court. Britain wanted Russia to rccognize Afghanistan to be within its own sphere of influence. There was also a lack of agreement between the two on the delineation of the frontiers of Afghanistan.

On Oct. 17, 1872 Lord Granville exhorted the Russian Imperial Government to put an end to "the wild speculation so calculated to distract the minds of the Asiatic races, that there is some marked disagreement between England and Russia on which they may build hopes of carrying out their feuds for purposes of self-aggrandisement."

Russia and Britain did agree on the delineation of the northern frontier of Afghanistan in 1873, but it was not demarcated on the ground.

Disraeli, leader of the Conservatives, replaced Gladstone, the Liberal leader, in 1874, at the head of the government in the United Kingdom. Lord Salisbury took over as Secretary of State for India, and after two years, as the Foreign Secretary. They may be regarded as ideologues of classic imperialism. A deterioration in Anglo-Russian relations started with this change of government. Lord Northbrook was replaced by Lord Lytton, as the Viceroy of India, in 1876. We know he initiated the Madhopur policy of using Ranbir Singh as the

British proxy for a forward policy on the Central Asian frontier However, General Kaufmann, Governor General of the Russian Empire in Central Asia, tried to bring about a change in this policy by making a direct overture to the British Viceroy in India. Kaufmann wrote:

> "Russia and England had in Asia one common interest and one common foe. The common interest was civilisation.... England should be closely allied and united with Russia.... Afghanistan as well as other Central Asiatic Mohammadan states ought to be divided between Russia and England so that the frontiers of the Indian Empire and that of Russia should be closely in touch with each other... England will have her friend the Christian Russian Empire near at hand to help her at times of risings in India, or in any other difficulties..."

Lytton rejected the overture, and asserted that Britain would defend Afghanistan and Beluchistan against agreession by any foreign state. Lytton's domineering attitude estranged the Amir of Afghanistan from Britain. He did not attend the Peshawar Conference with Britain held in Jan.-March, 1877. He sent only his Prime Minister in his own place. About the same time Sir Robert Sandeman forced a treaty on the Khan of Kalat enabling the British to establish a post at Quetta. This was done without even a reference to the Amir of Kabul, who regarded the Khan as his feudatory.

War between the Russian Empire and the Othoman Empire broke out in 1877. England took a strong anti-Russia stance. British naval units were sent to Malta. They occupied Cyprus, and are there to this day.

A major event of European politics of 1878 was the Congress of Berlin. Capitalism was entering the imperialist phase when trade was not the central objective of territorial expansion. Emphasis was on monopolist control of raw materials, and a wild period of land-grabbing had started on a global scale. Britain with the support of Germany and Austria succeeded in putting a check on Russian imperial designs. The Russian reaction to this was revealed in an article in the Moscow Gazette of July 19. 1878 :

"The time has arrived for Russia to establish her influence over the whole of Central Asia...The ruler of Afghanistan is not on good terms with England......The concentration of our influence on the frontiers of the territory of the Empress of India would be a natural answer to the English seizure of Cyprus......England wishes to be Russia's nearest neighbour in Asia Minor, and it is only natural therefore that Russia, in her turn, should desire to approach somewhat nearer to the English frontiers in India."

On November 21, 1878, Lytton, two years after launching the Madhopur policy for the frontier, declared war against Afghanistan. Three columns of the Indian army were moved in through the Khyber Pass, the Kurram Valley, and the Bolan (Khojek) Pass. The Amir of Afghanistan was forced to sign the Treaty of Gandamak by which he agreed to the seizure of the districts of Kurram, Pishin, and Sibi to the British. He also accepted a permanent British representative at Kabul, and undertook to carry out his foreign policy with the "advice of the Viceroy".

Only a few months passed before disorder broke out at Kabul. The British Agent residing there, Sir Cavagneri, was murdered, and Abdul Rahman establised himself as the new Amir. Within a year he annexed Herat and Kandahar. The British could do nothing to stop him. They had obviously wasted a sum of £14,000,000 of the British treasury, and an equivalent of £20,000,000 of the Indian taxpayer, together with the lives of 3,000 soldiers lost in the war. Now they were again back where they had started from in the first place.

The Liberals again came to power in the United Kingdom in April 1880. Lord Hartington was the new Secretary of State for India. Lytton was replaced by Lord Ripon as the Viceroy of India. Now the frontier policy associated with the Lawrence-Canning period was in force, and Lord Mayo again had the upper hand. Lord Dufferin replaced Ripon in December, 1884. This marked a change once again to the 'Forward Policy' on the frontier, which implied quest for British domination of Afghanistan. Also, the British tightened their control over the tribal belt on the Indo-Afghan frontier,

and succeeded in keeping Afghanistan outside the sphere of Russian influence. In 1885 the Panjdeh incident on the Afghan frontier, with Russian-held territory, brought the two major contending powers face to face on the Zulfikar Pass (off Herat) in the valley of the Murgab river. The Afghans had to give way. Amir Abdur Rahman of Afghanistan was himself in India with Lord Ripon at that time.

The Liberals were again defeated in the elections of June 1885, and Lord Salisbury took over as the British Prime Minister. An Anglo-Russian agreement was signed on Sept. 10, 1885. The final protocol was signed on June 22, 1887 at St. Petersburg (now Leningrad), the final exchange of notes taking place on June 2, 1888. This was the culmination of a process, initiated in 1873, when agreement was achieved on what should be the northern frontier of Afghanistan with the Russian held territory. This outcome satisfied Amir Abdur Rahman. Dufferin was replaced by Lord Lansdowne in 1888. Settlement over the Pamir region was negotiated during the years 1888-1895. It was in 1891 that Capt. Younghusband was expelled by the Russians from Bezai Gambez on the Pamirs. The British protested this was a violation of the 1873 agreement. The Central Asian question was thus reopened.

In 1892 the Liberals again came to power in U.K. Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy, sent Sir Mortimer Durand, his political secretery, to Kabul to persuade the Amir to meet Russian objections by withdrawing his forces from Roshan and Shignam although both places are south of the Oxus river, but he could keep Wakhan in the Pamir area. He also persuaded the Amir of Bukhara to withdraw from Darwaz. At this point General Roberts, the C-in-C of the Indian army, threw in his weight on the side of a forward frontier policy. While this zig-zag in policies was going on, the Afghans felt uncomfortable. In his autobiography Amir Abdur Rahman records :

> "It was not pleasant for me to think that the government of Afghanistan was to a certain extent under any Viceroy of India...and that I, the Amir of Afghanistan, should be merely a tool and a puppet to be made to dance by a

Viceroy. I am still anxious to relieve Afghanistan from this everlasting danger because it is an independent kingdom."

The relations between the British and the Afghan Government continued to deteriorate. One of the sources of friction was the steady British pressure to occupy strong posts of military value in the tribal belt. This would give rise to claims and counter-claims from the two sides. The British thus secured a military stronghold on Afghanistan by their occupation of Bejour, Chitral, Swat and New Chaman. New Chaman was connected by them to the Indian railway system by boring a tunnel in the Khojeh hills.

Having done all this Lansdowne sent an ultimatum to the Amir demanding that he recieve his envoy, Lord Roberts, at Jalalabad not later than October 1892. By way of a demonstrative show of force, Roberts carried a retinue of 10,000 soldiers for the conference. The mission became inconclusive because of another change of Government in England, which brought Gladstone, leader of the Liberal Party, back to power. With this Lansdowne and Roberts also lost their positions.

A fresh approach was made, and Mortimer Durand negotiated a border agreement with the Amir, which was signed on Nov. 12, 1893. Some concessions were made in the agreement to the Amir's objection to the British occupation of some of the strong points in the tribal belt around Afghanistan. The Amir was allowed to keep under his occupation Wakhan, Asmer, and the valley above it, Kafiristan, Mohmand, and a portion of Waziristan. The Amir, in his turn, undertook not to interfere in Swat, Bajour, and also relinquished his claim over the rest of the territories under British occupation, including Darwaj, Kurrum Valley, Chegeh and New Chaman, the tribal areas around Gomel pass, including those occupied by Ghilzai and Lohani tribes. By way of compensation for these concessions, the Amir's subsidy was increased from Rs. 12 to Rs. 18 lakhs per annum. A promise was also made that facilities would be available to the Amir to acquire arms.

Although understanding had been reached about the border, but its actual demarcation on the ground remained incomplete. Also the British kept the tribal areas separated from their administered territory in the North Western Frontier Agency. On their part the tribes ignored the dividing lines on paper, ignored the British presence, and never submitted to their rule. This situation continues to this day when the Pakistan government has supplanted the British.

Another shift in policy came in Jan. 1894 when Lord Elgin replaced Lansdowne as the Viceroy. The Government again relapsed into forward policy on the frontier. British control of the frontier was tightened, particularly in Chitral and Gilgit Agency. E.F. Knight, who worked under Col. Durand in the Hunza war to subjugate the Conjuits in 1891 wrote :

"The value of Gilgit to the Kashmir State, commanding as it does the Indus Valley and the mouth of the Hunza river, and so holding in check the unruly tribes on either side, is obvious enough; but it is only recently that the great strategical importance to the Empire of this position has been fully realized......Whatever position we take up with regard to the debatable land beyond Hindukush there can be no doubt as to what our course of action should be on the southern slope...It is necessary for the safeguarding of our Empire that we should at any rate hold our side of the mountain gates but unless we locked at it Russia would soon have both sides under her control."

Curzon, the flamboyant votary of the superiority of the white race, took over as Viceroy in January 1899. About the same time the Russian Empire connected Orenburg, in Western Siberia, to Tashkhand and Khushka in Central Asia, by rail. In his book on the Persian question, Curzon wrote : "Turkistan, Afghanistan, Transcaspia, Persia—they are the pieces of a chessboard upon which is being played out a game for the domination of the world."

Meanwhile other vital developments were taking place on the world scene. Britain was caught in a grim war with the Boers for the control of rich resources of South Africa at the

turn of the century. In 1904 Japan, a British ally, was at war with Imperial Russia. Not unrelated with this was the out break of the first Russian revolution in 1905.

On March 21, 1905, Britain signed an agreement with Amir Habibullah Khan, who had succeeded Abdur Rahman Khan in 1901. The treaty made no fresh break from the agreements reached in 1880.

1905 was also the year when the Liberals came to power both in U.K. as well as in Russia. By then, the growth of German industry and naval power had scared France, Great Britain, as well as the Russian Empire. Britain could no longer feel sure of "ruling over the waves." *Berlin-Baghdad* railway project appeared to be aimed at finding a direct route to the East avoiding the Mediterranean as well as the Red Sea. This created a new basis for the three empires for a rapprochement. So by May 1906, England started negotiations with Russia to sort out their differences. These were concluded on August 7, 1907. The Ottoman Empire used to be an obstacle in bringing England and Russia nearer. Now it was an ally of the German Empire. This facilitated the conclusion of an agreement between Imperial Russia and Great Britain on August 3, 1907. This comprised three agreements, one each on Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. The agreement on Afghanistan was more favourable to Britain. Imperial Russia formally agreed to treat Afghanistan outside their own sphere of influence, and not a "buffer" state. They agreed to conduct their political relations with Afghanistan through the British as intermediaries. In making these agreements the Afghans were not consulted. It annoyed Amir Habibullah to discover that these agreements had been negotiated without his knowledge.

The Russian Empire and the Japanese had also concluded a peace treaty on August 23, 1905, which recognized the 'special interests' of the two parties in eastern Asia and India. For people in Asia this event, as well as the revolutionary outbreak in Russia, were important events. The Russo-Japanese war signalled to the Asian people that it was possible for an Asian nation to defeat a European power in armed conflict. The second event exposed the feet of clay that an Imperial power like Russia had in the face of the organised might of its

own exploited, unarmed masses. The impact these events made was far-reaching in its consequences.

The post-1905 wind of change in Asia had its impact on the Afghans as well. This was reflected in the diminution of cordiality between the Afghan government and the British which had come into being during the visit of Amir Habibullah to Lord Minto in 1907. The Russian Foreign Ministry, however, reassured the British that the convention concerning Afghanistan was in force despite the failure to receive consent for it by the Amir. Unpleasant though it was, Afghanistan could not, however, do much about it. But it had its own way during the first world war (1914-1918), when it remained neutral. Now it was the turn of the British to put the best face on this...However, the Afghan problem remained dormant during the course of the war, and reappeared only after the success of the October Revolution in Russia. The Bolsheviks declared their support to all oppressed nations fighting for their independence and national self-determination. Afghanistan was one of the earliest beneficiaries of this world-shaking development. Lenin was the first to accord them recognition as a sovereign nation state. They defeated the British in 1919, under Amanullah Khan, Habibullah's son and successor. As the result of the Treaty of Rawalpindi, the British were also forced to accord them recognition as a sovereign nation. This was also the time when the whole of the Indian sub-continent was simmering with the people's post-war upsurge, brought to a crescendo by the massacre of Jallianwalla Bagh, and the Khilafat Movement.

5. British Consolidation in Jammu and Kashmir

The outline of Anglo-Russian relations given in the preceding chapter, particularly in the context of relations with Afghanistan, is a necessary preliminary to the understanding of the course of relations of the British government in India with the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir State, created as a result of the Amritsar Treaty of March 16, 1846. It has also been pointed out earlier that there was widespread resentment in the Anglo-Indian community that the state was not annexed by the British for direct rule, rather than handing it over to an Indian prince "in independent possession".

The myth of "independent possession", however, did not survive even two full years of the conclusion of the Treaty of Amritsar. As already pointed out it was only January 28, 1848 when Lord Hardinge manipulated an excuse for conveying to the Maharaja what he would be permitted or forbidden to do if he was to avoid "direct interference...which as Your Highness must be aware, would lower the dignity and curtail the independence of the Ruler". The warning was given with the hypocritical self-righteousness for which British imperialists have made a name throughout the world, to prevent their being "the blind instruments of a Ruler's injustice towards his people". So in less than two years after the creation of the state the British adopted the pretence of being the guardians of the people of Kashmir against the very ruler imposed by them upon the people for their own advantage.

Only four years elapsed and they imposed an 'Officer On Special Duty' on the State to look after the European tourists

who started flocking to the Valley and its frontier regions. The Maharaja had to give in but insisted that the officer leave the Valley in the autumn when the winter capital of the state shifted to Jammu as it does even now. This was disliked by the British but they thought it expedient to acquiesce in at that time. The European visitors were also required not only to leave the Valley by the end of November, but also to specify the routes they would follow in doing so. This was necessitated by the fact that the Maharaja's civil administration had to make prior arrangements for the transport and supplies to these visitors, which otherwise would not be available. This involved 'forced labour' or 'begar', and hence use of state machinery.

All this generated friction. But the Maharaja was anxious not to lose British confidence. The British on their part were in for a big shaking in 1857, when the Maharaja was for them "a friend in need". After that uprising they had to live up to the assurances given by Queen Victoria in her proclamation of 1858. So the Government of India had to temporise, and not precipitate a crisis over these issues. Meanwhile, with their characteristic habit of minutely studying their potential victims before hitting, they gave much attention to the study of the state through many British eyes, and using many guises—missionary, contractor, surveyors, educationists, doctors, geographers, travellers, etc.

That they were diligently doing their job can be seen by the record left by one Robert Thorpe, who spent several years in Kashmir and died in Srinagar at a young age. Here is an example of his diligent work :

> "There is not only no link between the governing class in Cashmere and the native inhabitants of the country, but there are all those deep-rooted antipathies which exist between Mussalmans and Hindoos. Those who know the feelings that exist between (the) two *races* do not require to be told that a country whose government is entirely composed of followers of one creed and whose population is entirely composed of adherents of the other, *must be oppressively and unjustly ruled* ; (that) the Mussulmans and

Hindoos to a certain extent amalgamate in Hindoostan, is no evidence to the contrary. *They have the common feeling of dislike to the English*, and, moreover, the Mussalman of India has lost almost all the distinguishing characteristics of his race and religion. None of the noble qualities which once animated the followers of that creed in so many quarters of the globe are to be found in the *semi-Hindooized* and consequently debased Mussulman of India...The people of Cashmere still kept up with much of its ancient purity, and with devotion and enthusiasm that would not have disgraced the best days of Islamism."

I. "I am a buffer"

Sir Edward E. Meakin, C.I.E., a Liberal British statesman, addressed a meeting of the East India Association in August, 1889. He observed : "I wish particularly to allude to the necessity of maintaining the confidence of the Indian princes in the justice of the English government". In this connection he referred to a meeting he had with Maharaja Ranbir Singh in 1876, who had related the following anecdote to him :

"I learned a great many things by my recent visit to Calcutta. Some of my people urged me not to go, saying that no sooner should I leave my territory than I should find myself a sort of an honoured State prisoner, something like Shah Shuja when he visited Ranjit Singh, who would not allow him to cross the Sutlej until he had left the Kohinoor behind him. They said it was an open secret that the British government wanted to annex Kashmir, and that it was only a question of time and skilful mano-euvring, and that I should be inveigled into allowing the first step towards the attainmant of that object before I should be permitted to return to my own country.

"At this point he broke into a derisive laugh.

"(Meakin) remarked that safety of His Highness's dominions lay in a good sound administration, and the encouragement of trade and commerce...that he must be careful not to give any excuse for the British authorities to interfere with him, and that if they did unjustly interfere, he might always rely upon the English press to defend his rights...

"The Maharaja, however, continued his train of thought... 'I am a *buffer*...yes, a *buffer*...on one side of me there is the big train of the British possessions, and whenever they push northwards they will tilt up against me. Then on the other side is the shaky concern Afghanistan ; on the other side of it is the ponderous train and engine called Roos. Every now and then there is a tilting of Roos towards Afghanistan, and simultaneously there is a tilting upwards of the great engine in Calcutta, and I am the poor little button between them..."

In an earlier chapter mention was made of the meeting of Maharaj Ranbir Singh with Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, on November 17 and 18, 1876 at Madhopur in Punjab. Lytton's predecessor as Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, had by way of parting advice to his successor, strongly recommended that Kashmir's control should be extended over Chitral and Yasin, right upto the southern side of the passes. Meanwhile, on Sept. 3, 1879, an uprising of Afghans caused the destruction of the British Residency in Kabul, and with that the policy in the spirit of Gandamak treaty, suited to the unification of Afghanistan under the British tutelage. This made Lord Lytton to change his policy. Now he aimed at the disintegration of Afghanistan. He outlined his new policy in these words :

"...the Maharaja (of J & K) should now be relieved of all responsibilities and deprived of all powers in regard to Chitral and Yasin ; that he should be simultaneously relieved of the small subsidy he pays the Mehtar of Chitral, and the undercover presence of a British officer at Gilgit ; that the agency for our relations with Chitral and Yasin should be transferred to Jalalabad, and that His

Highness should be plainly told that, henceforth, he will neither be required, nor permitted, to meddle with the affairs of any state, great or small, beyond the Kashmir frontier."

Within a few months, however, Lytton had to admit that he could not obtain a 'recognised and well-established political fulcrum at Jalalabad by which his new policy would stand or fall...'

Before leaving for home, however, he (declared) that the policy of Madhopur...indirect control from the east through Kashmir...(was) a 'complete failure'...Also that he was 'not cognisant of any practical advantage yet obtained by Major Biddulph's residence at Gilgit'.

According to Alder, a British expert, who occupied an important position in the Political Department in later years, "Biddulph...(during) three years' residence at Gilgit...organised a spy system which extended across the Hindukush, as far as Samarkand, and down the Indus, among the Pathan tribes."

A later government assessment, however, averred that: "Either the Government of India had to contract out of an influence in the area altogether, or it had to exert its influence vicariously through Kashmir. The first was patently unwise, the second no more than Lytton's Madhopore policy..." Ripon's Government admitted this to be "the only practical policy left open to us."

However, by April 1884, Lord Ripon had come reluctantly to the conclusion that there in fact was no alternative but to appoint a permanent 'Resident' in Kashmir. This step, it was argued, was called for, "not merely by the need for assisting and supervising administrative reforms but also by the increasing importance to the Government of India of watching events beyond the Western frontier of Kashmir."

Lord Lytton had proposed to Ranbir Singh the appointment of a Resident in Kashmir at his Madhopur meeting in 1876. But the reaction of the Maharaja was so strong that Lytton did not deem it expedient to press the demand. But now the Government of India kept up the pressure. "Lord Randolph

Churchill, Secretary of State for India,...hoped that the permanent Residency was only the first step towards annexation." However the resistance of Ranbir Singh to the imposition of a Resident was such that the British preferred to lie low, and wait for him to die before they pressed the proposal again.

In order to understand this seemingly irrational fear of a Resident, in its proper historical perspective, we have the authoritative exposition of the institution from no less an authority than the Marquis of Hastings. In his *Private Journal* under the date February 1st, 1814 he records :

> "In our treaties with them (Indian princes) we recognise them as Indian sovereigns, then we send a Resident to their courts. Instead of acting in the manner of an ambassador he assumes the functions of a dictator, interferes in all their concerns, countenance refractory subjects against them, and makes the most ostentatious exhibition of this exercise of authority. To secure himself the support of our government he urges some interest which, under the colour thrown upon it by him, is strenuously taken up by our Council and the Government identifies itself with the Resident not only on the single point but on the whole tenor of his conduct."

II. A Strategic Base

In 1881 the Maharaja was urged to push on the construction of a cart road from Srinagar to Kohala, already connected to Rawalpindi railhead, and for this was recommended the assistance of a British engineer, Mr. Speding. During the war scare of 1885 (Panjdeh incident, on the Afghan frontier) the Strategic Committee of the Government of India urged that the road should not only be rapidly completed upto Srinagar, but continued towards Gilgit and Chitral.

The road was not, however, open upto Srinagar until 1890. It was even later that Jammu was connected to Sialkote, and thereby to Lahore, by a rail link.

Meanwhile, the Amir at Kabul had sent a stiff letter, dated March 20, 1880, claiming Chitral as part of Afghan territory. Lord Ripon, the Viceroy, contacted London telegraphically, and after getting clearance, warned Abdur Rahman, the Amir, that "the Government of India was committed both to Kasmir's suzerainty over Chitral, and to the defence of the Maharaja's rights there". The Amir retreated, and in his reply promised not to interfere in Chitral, "no, not even if the Government of India severed it from Afghanistan." As regards the principality of Dir "Lord Lytton had been inclined to encourage the extension of Kashmir influence, but Ripon in 1881 discretely discouraged any such thing."

By 1883, for reasons which were not clear even to Whitehall but probably because of the Afghan activities the Indian government quietly reversed its attitude and stated that it would "welcome Kashmir-Dir (direct) relations."

During the war scare of 1885 over Panjdeh confrontation, when Anglo-Russian war seemed to be imminent, the Maharaja was warned that British troops might have to be stationed in the Valley.

About this time Lockhart and Woodthorn, British intelligence officers, prepared a confidential report of their Gilgit Mission. They took the view :

"The acquisition of Gilgit would secure for us the continued loyalty of Chitral, carrying with it our right of way through the Mehtar's dominions, and his active co-operation in time of need. In (our) opinion it would secure the safety of the Hindukush."

In 1888, Sir Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary to the Governor-General, instructed Capt. A. Durand, an Intelligence officer and his own brother, to "work out a scheme for rendering Gilgit secure without the aid of British troops, and for dominating from Gilgit through the Kashmir forces, the country upto the Hindukush, thus rendering Kashmir territory thoroughly secure against attack, and guarding against the possibility of a Russian force penetrating to Chitral and threa-ening our line of communication between Kabul and Peshawar through the Kunar Valley."

Already, in 1884, Lord Ripon had urged the Maharaja to reorganise his army. In 1888 an agreement was concluded with the Maharaja whereby a certain number of his troops were allocated for defence on the Gilgit frontier and by 1891 a considerable improvement had taken place in the British position.

In regard to the wisdom of planting an armed force under British officers in the dominion of an Indian prince, Sir Edwin Arnold K.C.B., one time editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and an expert on Lord Dalhousie's administration, has a revealing anecdote to relate :

> "In 1853, the Nizam came into our power by a process which has been often and successfully repeated in our Indian annals. There is a curious phenomenon in the insect world where an egg is deposited in the body of the living creature, which nourishes itself upon the substance of its unwilling nurse, gradually taking up all the fat, flesh and tissue of the victim till it dies or drags on a futile existence. Our government in India has frequently laid such an egg in the shape of a contingent within the confines of friendly states. Oudh, Gwalior, and the territories of Scindia were thus treated, and by no other means were the Dominions of the Nizam brought within the grasp of Lord Dalhousie."

So the British government took measures to "modernise" the state army by the "reduction of large masses of the armed rabble...and the substitution in their place of small compact bodies of well-trained, disciplined and regularly paid troops" referred to as the Imperial Service Troops, trained by the British, and placed under an English officer, Col. Neville Chamberlain, who was "appointed" by the Jammu and Kashmir state as its Military Secretary. It is interesting to recall now that it was this body, the Imperial Service Troops, which under Col. Bailey, raised the Pakistan flag at Gilgit on October 31, 1947, leading to formal annexation of about 20,000 square miles of strategic northern districts, i.e., everything north of Burzal Pass right up to Sinkiang border, by Pakistan some weeks later.

Gilgit Agency was garrisoned by the Imperial Service Troops formed by Capt. Durand. Spedding and Co., a British military engineering firm, was entrusted with the construction of a gun-carriage road between Srinagar and Gilgit. A telegraph line was laid to connect the Gilgit Agency with the British Military Head Quarter in India. In 1889, General Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief in India, visited Srinagar. He discussed with Col. A. Durand the frontier defence problems. A tight control over the state administration was also decided upon. All this was the basis of the boastful claims of Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy (1888-1893) about the state of frontier defence :

> "... We shall have the Upper Hindukush well watched, and the countries to the south of it closed against interference from China, Russia and Afghanistan, and we shall get some useful information from the districts beyond. We shall be protected against any *coup de main* from the northward and we may eventually succeed in establishing our influence in Kafiristan also. We shall thereby have provided for a really important part of our scheme of frontier defence, and at small cost to ourselves."

6. The Resident Takes Over

'Condemned unheard'

An excerpt from the Hansard records of July 3, 1890 is of interest to the subject being dealt with and so is being reproduced here :

"Mr. C. Bradlaugh (Irish M.P.) : I beg to ask leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing 'a definite matter of urgent public importance', viz, the taking away by the Government of India from the Maharaja of Kashmir the government of his state and part of his revenues, whilst refusing to allow any judicial or Parliamentary enquiry into the grounds for such action against a great feudatory prince....The Government of India have deprived this chief of his authority and of his property under cover of allegations which are emphatically denied by the Maharaja himself...This gentleman has been subjected to penalties which in the case of the meanest person in this country would entitle him to have the accusations brought before some tribunal and witnesses against him heard... The Maharaja has been condemned unheard...

"The right honourable gentleman (Sir John Gorst, the Under-Secretary of State for India) said : 'The action of the Government in India has been based not upon grave personal charges made against the Maharaja...'The man's character has been rumoured away and lied away with the help of forged letters used as instruments of political warfare—letters the authenticity of which has been denied by the Maharaja, letters

which have never been produced in his presence, and which yet the government have the face to refer to in their worst fashion in one of the despatches...

"The right honourable gentleman, the Under Secretary said the action of the government was based upon the long-continued misgovernment of Kashmir. Well, this unfortunate gentleman (Pratap Singh) has only been the ruler of Kashmir for about five years, and I will quote to within a few months of the time he was dispossessed, the testimony of the government itself that misgovernment did not exist as far as it was in *his* power to help it....I can conceive nothing more cool than the audacity of the confidence that this House would be imposed upon by the statement of the right honourable gentleman, the Under Secretary that there had been long-continued misgovernment in Ireland such as justified the dethronement of this man....The Viceroy himself says the government were justified "not merely by the disclosure of these letters" (June 26, 1889) which the man himself declares to be "nothing but daring forgeries"... and he suggests that one of the forgers, if not the only forger, is his brother (Raja Amar Singh—ed.) whom the Government of India has placed in the position of authority of which they have deprived this unfortunate gentleman himself... (Amar Singh was nominated by the Resident as the President of the 'Council' which took over the administrative powers from Pratap Singh through a coup organised by the Resident in 1889.)

"Last week... the Under Secretary said, 'We did not interfere (because of letters)... but because the people of Kashmir were so ground down by the tyranny and misgovernment of the Maharaja that we were bound as the paramount power to interfere for the protection of the interests of the inhabitants...,' If you want to steal Kashmir, as unfortunately we have stolen state after state in India and other parts, then say so at once, and at least have the merit of honest thieves... History, for the purpose of tonight's discussion began with the Treaty of 1846... the British government transferred and made over for ever, in independent possession, to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body the territory....This is not the case of an ordinary feudatory

state....In the statistical abstract of this very year you have the evidence of its non-inclusion up to 1881 amongst the feudatory states, and there was never anything to suggest that we had a right or duty to send a Resident there until 1885 on the death of the present Maharaja's father...(when it was thrust upon the Maharaja by the British). Some fourteen or fifteen years ago when jingoism was specially paramount in the making of great military frontiers and things of that kind, we looked with longing eyes upon the property of others, and were disposed to ignore any sense of justice in our dealings with them. It was then that Ranbir Singh had misgoverned the country...

"After the appointment of a Resident (1885) it is a monstrously unfair thing to spring a mine four or five years afterwards, and allege as an excuse that there had been misgovernment where, if it had been misgovernment, it should have been reported day by day, week by week, month by month, and year by year. There are no such reports...

"On the 14th Sept., 1885, the Viceroy sent a despatch, on the accession of the present Maharaja (Pratap Singh) to the throne....The Viceroy says : 'I trust Your Highness's life may be long and prosperous, and that, in all difficulties, of whatever kind, you will rely with confidence upon the goodwill of the British government...

"Having got the Resident at the capital...we find the Resident wants to get rid of the Maharaja...and submits some report to the government dated March 5, 1888....(Again) on August 1888 to the Government of India...the condition of the state did not seem to demand such action as Mr Plowden (the Resident) had suggested....Yet no less than seven months after that despatch power was taken out of his hand, and taken solely on these letters.

"The decision (August, 1889) that there should be no interference with the Maharaja directly or indirectly, disposes of Mr. Plowden's report of 8th of March, 1888.

"On the 25th of July 1888, Lord Dufferin (the Viceroy) wrote : I do not overlook the fact that since the appointment of the Conncil of which Dewan Lachman Dass was a member, considerable progress has been made in the direction of reforms;

useful work has been done with regard to the revenue administration, and in the reorganisation of the Public works and Medical Department. But much remains to be done.'

"This is not the language of condemnation of chronic misgovernment and the grinding down of the people. Misgovernment is only an invention—an excuse for having dispossessed this man.

"In the spring of 1889...the Viceroy charges : 'Notwith-
standing the ample resources of your state your treasury was
empty....' If that be so, how is it that they (the Government
of India—ed.) took from this man the advance or deposit or
loan of a large sum of money, amounting to twenty-five lakhs
of rupees ? They had this in their hands when the treasury
was empty. Why did they take money for Lady Dufferin's
admirable fund ? Why, if the treasury was empty, did they
not return the millions of rupees for railway works (Jammu to
Sialkote) in the interestes of frontier defence ? Treasury empty !
Why you and your Resident helped to empty it, then you tell
this unfortunate man (Pratap Singh) that it is a reason why he
should be dethroned...

"The despotic Government of India, as an Indian Secretary
once said, has no public opinion to influence it, no parliament
to control it, no press to criticise it...Despotism in the past has
been tainted with fraud and crime, and I hope it is not left to
the present government to revive these evil traditions in obtain-
ing possession of Kashmir...

"I think I shall be enabled to prove that the Maharaja has
been deprived of his inheritance simply by the pursuance of an
annexation policy, which was the approximate cause of the
Indian Mutiny. What has happened is what is called in Ireland
"land grabbing"...

"Dr. Hunter (M.P. for Aberdeen) : The Under Secretary of
State wound up his remarks, intended to be eloquent, with an
appeal to this House on behalf of the poor *Moslem cultivators.*
Why the *Moslem* cultivators ? Surely a Hindu if he happens to
be a cultivator, is as much entitled to sympathy as the Moslem.
But the right honourable gentlemen laid stress on the word
'Moslem' in order to excite those unhappy religious prejudices

which unfortunately prevail in India. We know that in India, unhappily, both Moslems and Hindus are animated by strong fanatical opinions on the subject of religion, leading to collisions and breaches of the peace. And here is the Under-Secretary for India pointing his moral by the contrast between the Moslem and Hindu peasants, and trying thus to fan the embers of religious antipathy....The argument that in consequence of the mismanagement of the revenue derived from the land, there was a great deal of poverty in the country, and that the population had largely diminished...The Maharaja has equally good reason for deposing you from the government of Ireland, if this argument has any validity whatever...We are told that the land revenue is extortionate...There is no doubt a margin which excites the cupidity of the British Government, and induces them to take possession of that country...Not a single argument adduced by the right honourable gentleman in reference to Kashmir but is applicable to Ireland, in the eyes of impartial people living outside the latter country."

The subject of virtual deposition of Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1888, discussed in the British Parliament, as indicated in the earlier part of this chapter, was also the subject of a sensational article in the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* of October, 1888 :

> "Today we shall publish a document which will startle India—probably Lord Lansdowne (Viceroy) himself. In the following document, the original of which His Excellency will find in the Foreign Office, the Viceroy will find the real reason why the Maharaja of Kashmir has been deposed. It will be seen that His Highness was deposed not because he resigned, or oppressed his people but because Giligit was wanted for strategic purposes by the British government. Mr. Plowden proposed that the principalities of Gilgit should be occupied by the British Government at once,...Sir H.M. Durand, the Foreign Secretary.. condemned Mr. Plowden's proposal, and him as a Resident, in the following memorandum which was submitted to the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin...'Opinion of the Foreign Secretary About the Occupation of Gilgit'.

To His Excellency, I do not agree with Mr. Plowden, the Resident in Kashmir, in this matter. He is too much inclined to set Kashmir aside in all ways, and to assume that if we want a thing done we must do it ourselves. The more I think of this scheme the more clear it seems to me that we should limit our overt interference, as far as possible, to the organisation of a responsible military force in Gilgit. So far we can carry the Durbar thoroughly with us. If we annex Gilgit or put an end to the suzerainty of Kashmir over the petty principalities of the neighbourhood, and above all, if we put British troops into Kashmir just now, we shall run a risk of turning the Durbar against us, and thereby increase the difficulty of the position.

"I do not think this is necessary. *No doubt we must have practically the control of Kashmir relations with those principalities, but this we already have.* Indeed, the Durbar has now, since the dismissal of Lachman Das, *asked Mr. Plowden to advise the Gilgit authorities direct without reference to them.* If we have a *quiet* and *judicious* officer at Gilgit, who will get the Kashmir force into thorough order and abstain from unnecessary exercise of his influence, we shall, I hope, in a short time have the whole thing in our hand without hurting anyone's feelings. Although, I think, our first step should be to send up temporarily and quietly a selected Military Officer (Capt. A. Durand of the Intelligence Department) and a junior Medical Officer. Both of them will have the support of the Durbar when and where it is necessary, and they *will not display any indiscretion, so that the Durbar may not have any hint of the work they are about to undertake*, and they will have to obtain the consent of the Durbar in matters concerning military difficulties. Once we can *establish a belief that our undertaking is nothing but the welfare of the Durbar we are sure to attain our object*. Time will show that my view is not a wrong one. In it lies, I venture to hope, the safe realization of *that object which was once contemplated in Lord Canning's time and afterwards was abandoned after deliberations.*

"Eventually Major Mellis should go to Kashmir *on the part of the Durbar* and submit a mature scheme for the

> better administration of the State, which is at present very badly managed indeed. This scheme should include the outline of our arrangements for strengthening the government policy. 'After the expiry of six months we will be in a position to decide the permanent location of a Political Agency at Gilgit, also a contingent of troops for the defence of the frontier, for which *the Durbar have already agreed to put thier resources and troops at the disposal of the British* government.'
>
> "Very well' Sd/- Dufferin
> 10th May
>
> Sd/- H.M. Durand
> 6th May"

Amrit Bazar Patrika also published in its issue of June 27, 1889, the letters alleged to have been written by the Maharaja to one Meerum Bux.

About the time the article given above (H.M. Durrand's letter to Lord Dufferin) appeared in the *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, the Government of India already had before the Legislative Council sitting in Simla without its non-official members, a bill intended to make the publication of official secrets a penal offence.

The *Statesman* (Calcutta) commented :

"....The main allegations of the Patrika, even thus practically admitted by the Viceroy, in his speech on official Secrets Bill..."

The subject of Maharaja Pratap Singh's virtual deposition also formed a subject of a letter from Sir William Digby, a Liberal member of the British Parliament, to Rt. Hon. Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Under Secretary of State for India. The letter was published under the title 'Condemned Unheard' in London in July, 1890. Some excerpts of interest are reproduced here :

> "...The Indian government played the three fold part of Accuser, Judge and Executioner...Sir Lepel Griffen, with the shameless audacity which characterises his conduct towards the Indian races, people and princes alike, declared the Maharaja to be a 'drunken debauchee....No acts of misgovernment have been proved against His Highness ;

according to my information none exist. It is true : mis-government—*tested by a European standard*- exists in Kashmir—*as it exists in British India*...

"I found occasion to remark a year ago, that it has been the practice of some Anglo-Indians to trade largely on abuses in Kashmir, which existed only in their imagination .. During the reign of the late Maharaja (Ranbir Singh) certain Anglo-Indian newspapers were continually writing of the misgovernment of Kashmir, declaring that misgovernment established occasion for British intervention. The gravest charges of neglect and even dreadful cruelty, were brought against the late Maharaja. On one occassion it was declared that His Highness, in order to save the expenses of feeding his people during a time of great scarcity, actually *drowned them by boat-loads at a time* in the Srinagar lake. The Maharaja declined to sit quietly under this calumny, and at his request a Mixed Commission was appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the truth of the story. The Commission found that there was no truth in the hideous statement. The people said to be drowned were discovered to be living, and were actually produced at the inquiry. Other calumnies of a like kind were circulated, and all on examination by the British Resident, were found to be false...

"I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether ... (he) is aware that the Government of India virtually annexed the State of Kashmir to British India, and subjected its ruler to great indignities... (he) has been reduced to that of a mere pensioner of state funds, that he is *not to attend meetings of the Council*, and that the Council is 'expected to exercise the Power of Administration it possesses 'under the guidance of the British Resident... Three or four of the six members of the Council...being *officials selected by the Government of India*, have also been informed that they are to take no steps of importance without consulting the Resident, and they are to follow his advice whenever it may be offered....'

"I wish to ask my noble friend the Secretary of State for India whether there is any foundation for the rumour, which

seems to have occasioned some alarm in different parts of India that it is the intention of the Government of India to take possession of the native state of Kashmir.

"The late (sic) Maharaja (Pratap Singh), unfortunately has not the strength of character and indomitable will of his predecessor. He is an exceedingly kind-hearted and good-natured man, fond of work, never sparing himself, and is greatly solicitous for the welfare of his subjects. All who are brought into contact with him speedily learn to love him."

At the time of Pratap Singh's accession on September 16, 1885, the British Agent in Kashmir had sent a report to the Foreign Department of the Government of India, from which some extracts are produced here :

".. After a few sentences of compliment and condolence I told Pertab Singh that I had a message for him from the Viceroy, to be delivered in the presence of his Council. The message I had to deliver was not private and confidential, though very important.... I had hoped to deliver it to His Highness in Durbar, but this being impossible I begged that he should call in at least Babu Nilamber and Dewan Govind Sahai, *who I knew were waiting outside....*

"The first point of the message referring to the introduction of reforms was received without any mark of surprise by my auditors, but the announcement of the immediate appointment of *a Resident* was evidently an unexpected blow....

"In the evening Babu Nilamber called on me...and asked that I would explain, for the Maharaja's information, what was meant by the 'assistance of a Resident'....I told him that *I could not undertake to define the exact duties of a Resident*, but that he would certainly leave all the active work of the administration to the Durbar, while *claiming the right to be made acquainted, should he require it, with all its details. He would give advice if asked for, and on any point he thought proper, unasked; and in the latter case would expect his advice to be followed.*

"Babu Nilambar finally acknowledged that the main objection was to the name 'Resident'... . The public appointment of a Resident would show these officials that there was something beyond caprice or the zeal of a new ruler in the reforms initiated at Jammu, and they would soon recognise that they must be carried out...I regretted that I could not recommend to His Excellency any delay in the formal appointment of a Resident..."

True to type, the Resident did fulfil his assigned role when two years later, on March 5, 1888, he wrote to the Government of India from his office in Sialkote :

"I think that the Government of India should be under no illusion as regards Maharaja Pratap Singh. From first to last I have failed to discover in him any sustained capacity for governing his country, or any genuine desire to ameliorate its condition, or to introduce those reforms which he has acknowledged to be necessary.

"I do most earnestly advise that the Maharaja be made plainly to understand that he has had his chance, and that he will not be allowed any longer to stand in the way. I would assign him *a liberal income*, to be placed at his absolute disposal, and treat him with the full honour as the titular Chief, but I would *exclude him from all real power.* He may reign, but not govern..."

When the stratagems conceived by the Resident and his accomplice, Raja Amar Singh (Hari Singh's father), succeeded, Partap Singh in his deep humiliation and despair cried out : '*Let them locate a cantonment and take any portion of my territory, but why do they trouble me in this way and put me to all sorts* of disgrace?'

The British Resident and his accomplices had done their homework with some thoroughness. The 34 forged letters, in Dogri, "discovered" revealed treasonable activities of Partap Singh for the murder of the Resident, and collusion with Russian Czardom's expansionist plans. A contemporary writer put the whole position in an article entitled "Kashmir and Khiva" thus :

"...Though John Bull submitted quietly to the Khivan aggression, which permitted his foes (the Russian Empire) 'to sit down' almost at his very door, he knew full well that Russia would make a very positive and practical 'remonstrance' against the annexation of Kashmir by England. Hence quite a different line of policy had to be observed. After having satisfied the world at large by repeated and plausible assurances that her intentions towards Kashmir were strictly honourable and purely philanthropic, England proceeds to lay that country at her feet by moral and not military pressure. First, the Ruler is deposed for no reason except that he was in the way of the scheme. Then, Rulers in the shape of a Council, are appointed by England, being controlled and directed by an English Resident. Then Kashmir is compelled to make a costly military road from the British frontier to her capital. Then, the control of the Kashmir army is obtained at Gilgit. And, lastly, Kashmir is made bankrupt by forced expenditure and a forced loan, and to-day...lies as much at the mercy and under the domination of England as though she had been forced formally, and officially annexed by that ever-absorbing power..."

William Digby said in the Parliament :

"It is perfectly safe that there is not an Indian Prince who did not feel his throne shake when the Maharaja of Kashmir was deprived of all power...The arbitrariness of the Act made itself felt everywhere....The Maharaja was 'cabined, cribbed, confined'...Though Indians have not votes, account must be taken of their feelings; it is only the contented acquiescence of the Indian people that satisfactory British rule can be continued in our Indian Empire....

"Unpleasant smiles are used by the public in discussing these matters, as, for example, one in which Khiva and Kashmir are connected, and the British Indian and Russian governments are contrasted. It is made clear that the conduct which most Anglo-Indians and some home-staying Englishmen are never tried of condemning in Central Asian Russians fined its parallel nearer home..."

It is clear from what has been said before that the Resident held supreme power in the state from 1889 to 1921. But this power was used to take care of the imperial interests, and unseen by ordinary people. It suited the British to make it seem that they were the champions of the poor exploited people of Kashmir. All the wealth spent on connecting the Valley with the military cantonments in Rawalpindi and Sialkote, connecting Gilgit with Srinagar, or subjugating people in Hunza, Nagar, Yasin, Chitral, Darel, Dir, etc. was paid for by the Jammu and Kashmir State. Yet no one blamed the British for the heavy cost the people of the state had to pay for the glory of the Empire.

The same is true of *begaar* or forced labour, which was used on a tremendous scale to keep supplies available to the garrisons in the frontier. Many an Englishman has written pathetic stories of the plight of Kashmiri peasants who were victims of *begaar*, but the hard-headed empire builders knew full well that it suited their own requirements. For instance, E.F. Knight, an expert, writes : "Many thousands of villagers have been driven off every year to toil as carriers of burden on the Gilgit road. Gilgit is a name of terror throughout the state. An enormous transport service is needed to supply the garrisons on the northern frontier with grain..." "For one man who is taken on this forced labour, ten purchase their immunity from the officials, as much as one hundred rupees being paid in some instances.

"Begar is a just and useful institution; there is no hardship in properly conducted and legitimate forced labour; it could not be abolished by a stroke of the pen..."

The *Statesman* reporter wrote of Col. Nisbet, the British Resident :

> "...(his) baggage was sent by the Maharaja's private route at State expense...carriage of a whole household of furniture means the impressing of hundreds of poor unoffending peasants all along the route...for weeks together...contrary to the best traditions of English rule...is scandalous....It has often been a reproach to the British administration that political officers of high merit and integrity should place themselves under indirect pecuniary obligations to the Princes,

whose interests they are supposed to watch. Our gallant Colonel lives...never at the Maharaja's Capital...but at Sialkot...house belonging to the State and furnished at Stat expense...a quarter of the expenditure from the same source...Even in distant Lahore (he is) provided with a finely furnished house and carriages...while at Srinagar it is impossible to estimate the amount expended for Residency purposes...."

This double-faced strategy enabled the British to squeeze the state dry of its resources while at the same time cultivating many among the Kashmiri elite, as champions of the "poor Muslims" against the tyranny of a Hindu Prince.

It is characteristic of the British technique that as soon as the First World War started they cunningly allowed Pratap Singh to use greater fiscal powers, to the extent of making budget proposals. They knew that loot and scarcity in the war would entail hardships for the people, and scarcity of every commodity needed by the people. So they graciously asked Pratap Singh to do the bleeding openly with his own hand to save them from the odium of fleecing the ragged mass of the people.

There was, however, one reform during the tenure of Pratap Singh's reign which gave some immediate relief to the peasantry in the Valley, while benefiting the state also with a higher and more stable income. This was the land settlement introduced by Sir Walter Lawrence, whom Pratap Singh appointed as the Settlement Officer in 1887. The main items of the reform were :

1. He persuaded farmers to occupy land-holdings, and fixed the state's share for ten years. This was calculated at 30 percent of the gross produce for each type of land, depending on the water supply available and the quality of the land.

2. Part of the payment could be in cash. No longer was it necessary for the sepoys to be present at harvest time. The landholder got occupation rights, but he was not allowed to sell or mortgage the holding. He

was, however, *de facto* owner, and could pass it on to his descendants so long as the revenue was paid to the state. The collection of revenue in kind was to be done by the Settlement department and not 'sepoys'.

3. Land Settlement did give considerable relief to the peasantry immediately, and a stable revenue to the state.

But the rent in cash linked the Kashmiri peasant to the market for the first time. The consequences of this historic change became acute during the First World War, and the Great Depression. During the war, grain traders literally squeezed out the blood of the people through black-marketing, and very nearly caused a social upheaval. This was averted by the extraordinary initiative of an enlightened local officer, who in 1922, organised Srinagar Graneries—later Food Control Department—on co-operative lines. Grain was purchased from the producer direct, at a price that he had never received before. It was distributed in the city through a system of rationing, at a reasonable price almost on a 'no profit, no loss' basis. The system has survived to this day. Though it is one of those exceptional 'small mercies' that the people of Kashmir have been beneficiaries of over a long stretch of time, it has elicited hostile comments from many a Viceroy and British expert, as being an uncalled-for interference in the market operations by the State, which is a great sin. However, those responsible for governing the Valley have invariably ignored this criticism.

The British did, however, hit the peasantry in the state whenever they could not be seen doing so. For instance, through administrative manipulation they surreptitiously used the water resources of the state for the benefit of farmers in the Punjab, their main recruiting area. This was plain robbery. But it came to light fully as late as on February 7, 1948, when Sir Mohammed Zafarullah Khan, then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, in his marathon speech in the Security Council, revealed : "Ravi, Ujh, Indus, Jehlum Chenab, have already helped to irrigate 19 million acres of land in Punjab". These surreptitiously acquired rights were later used to prevent the

state authorities to use their own water resources in the interest of landholders lower down. It is well-known that food shortage has been a chronic feature of the *Kandi* areas in the state, and this is accounted for to a large extent by this pilferage of water of rivers originating in the state.

Another aspect of the British rule in this period was the decay of local industry. The ancient industry of pashmina-shawl manufacture which flourished during Moghul rule, with 40,000 weaving looms in the state, and even in 1865 brought an export income estimated to be £ 254,498, was practically dead by 1880.

A shawl trader of the late nineteenth century, Mukhtar Shah (Ashai) has left an authentic account of the decay of this industry. In 1858, according to him over 40 lakh rupees worth of shawls were exported to France. By 1886 the industry was dead affecting the livelihood of 5 lakh people. This affected not only the weavers and traders, but almost every family in the Valley, because every operation from the cleaning and sorting of raw material was done in Kashmiri homes, through a purely indigenous technology. This was a shattering development. Kashmir used to manufacture some of the best paper in Asia. This industry also perished. Manufacture of cotton fabrics also practically stopped, and even wollen goods started to be imported.

It is only after the first world war that a revival of some of the fine arts and crafts started through the increase in tourist traffic, with a significant contribution also from A.I. Spinners' Association. A class of new traders and contractors came into existence, who depended to a large extent on the influx of tourists, mostly European. Next to them in economic power were shawl dealers, when the industry revived during the twenties. Carpet manufacture also revived and automobiles started plying on the roads in the early twenties. Punjabi capital was mostly invested in trade in essential commodities—tea, cloth, condiments, hardware, banking, forwarding, timber export, and major civil works in which the British were pioneers.

7. Impact of October Revolution

The October Revolution that took place in Russia on November 7, 1917, is by now recognised, by friend and foe alike, to be a major landmark in human history. It has proved to be the most decisive event in modern times in the history of Asia, if not for the whole world. Not only did the Russian Empire—"prison-house of nations" as Lenin called it—get shattered and thrown to the dust, but also the whole conceptual basis of empires—inherent inferiority of some races and peoples, natural right of the strong over the weak, the necessity of propertied classes to impose hard work and discipline on the working people for enhanced production of wealth, development of arts and science, and finer graces of human spirit, as was commonly supposed. No one except the ruling classes really believed such claims, but no one had demonstrated their absurdity on a large enough scale. Similarly, few believed that national, religious, and ethnic chauvinism can be rooted out in such a short time span, that complete equality of sexes can be a fact of life for hundreds of millions of people of Europe and Asia alike. Right of self-determination of nations, to the point of secession, became a reality over a stretch of land comprising one sixth of the land surface of the planet, and hundred odd ethnic, linguistic, and other groups.

The role of a Communist Party, as a vanguard of the working class, with its science of social transformation, which Lenin's genius had developed at the turn of the century, was fully understood only during the course of building of this new

type of civilization. All the traditional concepts of human nature, hitherto used to explain the often irrational or perverse human behaviour in class society proved to be misanthropic, and not basic truths. Vague notions of human brotherhood that had been dimly sensed for ages took, for the first time in history, got a concrete form in the big new reality that was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. All this, however, was to come in subsequent years. But even in 1919, when many were not sure the Bolsheviks would survive the onslaught of the fourteen most powerful nations of the world, the Indian revolutionary, Prof. Barkatullah could confidently assert :

> " The ideas of the Bolsheviks...have caught on among the Indian masses...small sparks of active propaganda were enough to light the grandoise revolutionary fire in all Central Asia....However easily it is possible to occupy territory and conquer small peoples...it is impossible to suppress great ideas—I think the English are already too late..."

Indeed, the imperialists the world over were thrown into a panic. The British and the French imperialists were in the vanguard of the "march of the fourteen" nations, including U.S.A. and Japan, who were out "to strangle Bolshevism at its birth". After squandering great wealth, causing the direct and indirect destruction of hundreds of thousands of human lives for over four years in the vast expanses of Asia and Europe, they were forced to withdraw in utter dismay. The new tide of freedom and equality released by the October revolution washed away the filth of the ages, and gave a chance to hundreds of millions of the exploited masses to build a new life for their own good. This transformation on a colossal scale has no precedent in history, and it opened out perspectives of vast advancement to many more millions smarting under age-old oppression.

Just a month after the capture of power by the Bolsheviks i.e., on December 7, 1917 the Viceroy received a cable from Whitehall (London), intimating that "the highly inflammable proclamation issued over the wireless by the Soviet government, addressed to "all labouring Moslems of Russia and the

East" must be "suppressed as long as possible". An excerpt from the document referred to is reproduced here :

"Moslems of the East, Persians, Turks, Arabs and Indians, all those whose bodies, property, freedom and country had been commodities in the hands of the grasping vultures of Europe, all those whose countries the plunderers who had started the war want to share among themselves,

"We declare that the secret treaties of the deposed Czar on the seizure of Constantinople, the treaties that have been confirmed by the deposed Kerensky, are now annulled and destroyed. The Russian Republic and its government, the Council of People's Commissars, are against the seizure of foreign territories. Constantinople must remain in the hands of the Muslims. "We declare that the treaty on the division of Persia has been annulled and destroyed. Troaps will be withdrawn from Persia has been annulled and destroyed. Troops will be withdrawn from Persia as soon as military operations stop, and Persians will be ensured the right freely to decide their own destiny.

"We declare that the treaty on the division of Turkey and on depriving her of Armenia has been annulled and destroyed. Armenians shall be ensured the right freely to determine their political destiny as soon as military operations cease. Enslavement awaits you not at the hands of Russia or her revolutionary government but at the hands of the predators of European imperialism, of those who have turned your homeland into a 'colony', which they are looting and robbing...."

About this time Prof. Barkatullah, the Indian revolutionary in Kabul, wrote :

"Just now it is difficult to say how future events will take shape. I only know one thing, that the well-know appeal of the Soviet government of Russia to all peoples calling on them to struggle against capitalists (and for us, capitalist is synonym for the foreigner, more accurately the Englishman) has created on us colossal impression. Even bigger impression was produced by the annulment by Russia of all secret treaties imposed by imperialist governments and the proclamation of the right of peoples however small they may be to self-determination.

"That act united around Soviet Russia all the exploited peoples of Asia and all the parties, even parties far away from Socialism. These acts predetermined and brought nearer the Asian revolution.

"The English immediately understood the consequences of the new Russian slogans and adopted all measures in order to seal all routes from Russia to India. Hence the advance of the English to Merv, attempting to conclude agreement with Bukhara, and finally the creation of Ferghana front under the auspices of the Russian white guards in order not to let the Russian influence into Eastern China"

The British Secretary of State met the Aga Khan in London. The Viceroy was directed to see the Nizam of Hyderabad to make sure the loyalty of Muslims was not subverted. Lenin's proclamation about the right of self-determination of all nations was for the British imperialists a "diabolical move to subvert the Empire".

In March 1919 Amir Habibullah of Afghanistan was assassinated. Amanullah, who hated the British, ascended the throne. Prof. Barkatullah, "as one of the most trusted persons of the new Amir, was sent to Moscow as 'ambassador extra-ordinary' for establishing permanent relations with Soviet Russia. With this the new Amir cancelled the alliance treaty with the British, according to which Afghanistan was obliged not to enter into diplomatic relations with any other than England".

In response to this gesture Lenin addressed a letter to the King on May 27, 1919 :

"I wish to congratulate Your Majesty on your accession to the throne on Feb. 21, 1919....The Workers' and Peasants' government has granted genuine equality and liberty to all the nations composing the Russian Republic, and...has firmly adopted the internationalist principle of unity of all toilers against exploiters...

"Establishment of permanent relations between the two great nations will present broad opportunities against any encroachment by foreign predatory forces on their freedom..."

This was the first time ever when an independent Afghan state was given due recognition by a major power.

Britain, sensing the new situation full of perils, declared war on Afghanistan. An army of 340,000 troops was collected for the invasion. Afghans were able to put forth only 60,000 troops in the field. However, with moral and material support from the Soviet Union the Afghans managed to defeat the British, and forced them to sign a treaty at Rawalpindi on August 8, 1919. It was then that Britain for the first time unambiguously recognized Afghanistan as an independent state. Later, on the 28th of February, 1921, the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic (U.S.S.R. had not been formed till then) also signed a treaty of friendship with Afghanistan. It was the first such treaty that was signed by the Afghan national state.

Meanwhile the British were active in anti-Soviet activities in Central Asia. They tried to restore Amirs, Begs, and Khans in Central Asia, who had been overthrown by their long-oppressed subjects. For many of these interventionist subversive activities Kashmir was the base. It was from here that Lt. Col. E.M. Bailey started his destabilising conspiratorial mission. The same holds for Lt. Col. P.T. Etherton, the British Consul-General and Political Resident in Sinkiang. In his well-known book *In the Heart of Asia*, he records :

> "The opening of 1918 was significant for developments inimical to allied interests (i.e., Anglo-French-American alliance) not only in Europe but also in Asia, where safety of our empire in the East was threatened....The Bolshevik revolution had created a new set of ideas...self-determination was the watchword, a doctrine which, if carried to its logical conclusion must result in anarchy and widespread enmity, jealousy and chaos..."

Another interventionist, the Russian Whiteguard Gen. Zaitsey has recorded in his *Memoirs* that...the intention of the mission was to "prepare and organise armed uprisings against the Soviet power in Turkistan, and to arrange for the supply of rebel detachments with arms and money from the nearest English bases, Meshed, Kashgar, Afghanistan".

A wireless station was installed at Gilgit. Airfields were constructed at Gilgit and Chilas. How all these reactionary plans failed in the face of the new upsurge among the long-suffering people of Central Asia, now inspired by the practical example set by the Bolsheviks, is now part of history. Inevitably, however, Kashmir always happened to be under the searching eye of professional anti-Soviet provocateurs, and intelligence experts of imperialism because of its unique geographical situation. This has created problems for the liberation movement in Kashmir, which are still proving to be intractable.

While the civil war in the erstwhile Russian empire was still raging furiously, on March 2, 1919, an international communist congress met in Moscow to lay the foundation of a permanent international organisation under the slogan 'workers and the oppressed nations of the world unite'. There were 52 delegates from 52 countries of Europe, America and Asia, including those from Persia, China, Korea and Turkey present at the inaugural session. India was not represented, thanks to the efficiency of the British iron curtain fastened around its prize possession. Some Indian revolutionaries did, however, meet Lenin about that time. In fact, it was in one of these meetings that Prof. Barakatullah (Bhopali) placed before Lenin the request of Afghan government for Soviet help against the British. At the inauguration it was stated :

> "In the postwar period the allies are openly trampling the principle of self-determination ..by refusing that right to Ireland, India, Egypt....About India and Egypt even the question does not appear on the agenda of the Committee meetings of great powers or in the allied press ...The 'principle of self-determination' is being openly substituted by 'division of disputed territories' among the ruling states and their vassals..."

The Manifesto adopted at the Congress stated : "....The last war, which was not the least a war for colonies, was at the same time a war fought with the help of colonies. The colonial populations were drawn into the European war on an unprecedented scale. Indians, Negroes, Arabs and Madagascans, fought on the European continent—for what ? For their

right to remain the slaves of England and France. Never before has the infamy of capitalist rule been shown up so clearly; never before has the problem of colonial slavery been posed so sharply as it is to-day.

"Consequently, there has been a series of open insurrections, revolutionary ferment in all the colonies. In Europe itself Ireland reminded us by bloody street battles that it still remains and still feels itself an enslaved country. In Madagascar, Anam and other countries the troops of the bourgeois republic had more than one revolt of colonial slaves to suppress during the war. In India the revolutionary movement has not subsided for a single day, and has lately led to the greatest workers' strike in Asia, which the British government met by ordering its armoured cars into action in Bombay. "Thus the colonial question in its fullest extent has been placed on the agenda, not only on the order papers of the diplomats in congress in Paris, but also in the colonies themselves..."

This was followed by a promise :

"If capitalist Europe forcibly dragged the backward sections of the world into the capitalist whirlpool, then Socialist Europe will come to the aid of liberated colonies with its technology, its organization, its spiritual forces, in order to facilitate their transition to a planned and organized socialist economy." This is what Soviet Union has been doing for us.

In 1918 the Montagu-Chelmsford Report on constitutional reforms in India, made the observation : "The revolution in Russia was regarded in India as a triumph over despotism...It has given an impetus to Indian political aspirations."

Chelmsford, the British Viceroy, tried to use the Russian bogey (or Bolshevik bogey) as an argument for trying to persuade Gandhiji to suspend mass satyagraha. Gandhiji did not fall in the trap, and asserted : "I have never believed in a 'Bolshevik menace'."

Tilak in his papar *Kesari* on January 29, 1918, stressed Lenin's adherence to "the socialist doctrines of Karl Marx...advocating 'peace'...and his stress on the creative role of toiling people."

Prestigious journals like *Bombay Chronicle*, *Modern Review*, and many other patriotic publications showed their appreciation of Lenin's decrees on peace, land, and declaration on the

rights of the people of Russia. This caused great fear and dismay among the imperialist circles. Cecil Kaye, Head of the Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India, warned the administration in January 1921 that the agricultural workers' organizations growing up in the United Provinces and Bengal were "Bolshevik minded", and that land distribution on the Bolshevik pattern would be very welcome to the Indian peasantry.

This was the situation in which the *Sedition Committee Report* under Justice Rowlatt proposed the Rowlatt Bill to initiate a regime of draconian repression and complete suppression of elementary democratic rights and liberties.

The new developing situation created by the success of the October Revolution inevitably stimulated fresh interest in Kashmir. If an iron curtain is to be tightened against the ideas of socialism, and a campaign of disinformation about real socialism is to be effectively let loose, then Kashmir and Afghanistan acquire decisive importance as base camps for the imperialist strategists, particularly because large numbers of poor Muslim peasants inhabit these areas and are so close to Soviet Central Asian republics.

Mr. B.G. Glancy, an expert on Kashmir, and First Assistant to the British Resident in the Jammu and Kashmir State, wrote to the president of the Council of Ministers of the State on December 23, 1919 :

"I am directed to inform you that the Govt. of India have decided to take defensive measures against the Bolshevik propaganda. Though actual proof of Bolshevik activity in India itself is small, the Govt. of India think that a serious situation may develop unless systematic protective measures are adopted...

"I am to ask that a careful watch may be kept by the police for any Bolshevik literature which may be found in circulation. It is known that such literature has reached Persia and it may be smuggled into the State by land from Central Asia. In the opinion of the Resident any Bolshevik literature found in circulation should be forthwith proscribed by the Durbar."

On April 23, 1920 the British Resident sent to the Prime Minister forty copies of an Urdu translation of the *Fatwa*

issued by the Shaikh-ul-Islam of Constantinople, denouncing the Russian Revolution.

The seemingly modest role of an interested well-wisher that the Resident adopts in these communications is only a verbal style that the British imperialists liked to adopt to be able to pass off as trustworthy gentlemen. It is, however, necessary to recall the clarification regarding a Resident's role officially given to Maharaja Pratap Singh when the Resident was first thrust upon him in 1885 in the face of his protests: "(The Resident) would give advice if asked for, and, on any point he thought proper, unasked, and in this latter case would expect his advice to be followed."

Despite the all-pervading Intelligence network of imperialism, *cordon sanitaire* around the Soviet Union, loud din of disinformation campaigns, the administrative efficiency of imperialist powers, lack of scruple by frightened reaction everywhere, backed by the military might and resources of half-a-dozen imperialist powers monopolising the world's wealth, the Bolshevik apparition could not be held bottled up within the Soviet borders. A wind of change swept the whole world. 'Hands-off-Russia' campaigns gained strength among the working-class of imperialist countries themselves. Communist parties on the model of the Bolshevik Party sprang up in dozens of countries, and put themselves under the discipline of the Communist International, founded by Lenin, to give leadership to the working class movement on a global scale with the slogan "workers and oppressed nations of the world, unite." Streams of blood flowed at Amritsar and other places on the Indian subcontinent. "(In India) the strike movement which began in 1918 and swept the country in 1919 and 1920 was overwhelming in its intensity. The end of 1918 saw the first great strike affecting our entire industry in a leading centre in the Bombay cotton mills; by January 1919, 125,000 workers covering practically all the mills, were out. The response to the hartal against the Rowlatt Acts in the spring of 1919 showed the political role of the workers in the forefront of the common national struggle. During 1919, strikes spread over the country. By the end of 1919 and the first half of 1920 the wave reached its height."

On October 31, 1920, the All India Trade Union Congress held its first inaugural congress in Bombay. Lala Lajpat Rai was its first president. Tilak was one of its vice-presidents. Lala Lajpat Rai told his audience :

> "Militarism and imperialism are twin children of capitalism; they are one in three and three in one. Their shadow, their fruit and their bark, are all poisonous, It is only lately that an antidote has been discovered and that antidote is organised labour" ...... "Any bond of brotherhood or of mutual interest between workers of Europe and America, on the one hand, and those of Asia on the other, would have destroyed the spell by the force of which they exploited and sweated both.
>
> "My own experience of Europe and America leads me to think that Socialistic or Bolshevik truth is any day better, more reliable and more human than capitalistic and imperialistic truth."

People were on the move in China, Indonesia, Egypt, Ireland, Turkey, Iran and many other places. A congress of the revolutionary organizations of the Far East took place in Jan.-Feb., 1922 in Moscow and Petrograd in which representatives of China, Japan, Mongolia, India, Indonesia and Siberia participated. Sen. Katayama of Japan later reported that a united front of revolutionary organizations of the Far East was set up at the congress. "The Japanese, Chinese and Korean communists have...set up a united front against Japanese imperialism". The Nehru family decided they should see the Socialist State with their own eyes. Their visit had far-reaching consequences, and was followed by the visit of Rabindranath Tagore. Kashmir also showed early signs of awakening. The wind of change found reasonance among the working people of Srinagar, and this touched imperialism at its most tender spot. In 1848 and more so in 1865, the shawl workers (*Khandwaav*) of Srinagar had played a vanguard role in initiating mass actions fearlessly against medieval oppression. Now it was the silk factory workers who showed themselves as the harbingers of a new epoch of mass struggle for emancipation.

Ranbir Singh, during the seventies of the last century revived the ancient tradition of silk industry by introducing cocoon rearing as a subsidiary occupation for peasants, and spinning of silk yarn on filatures imported from Europe. Mulberry leaves are used for feeding silkworms and so the mulberry tree was declared to be, like the walnut and the *chinar*, a protected tree. Peasants get eggs ('seed') from the government-owned silk factory, and deliver cocoons back to the sericulture department, and collect payment for the same at a fixed rate. The cocoons are boiled in the silk factory, and yarn spun out on filatures. In the early twenties, about 10,000 workers in Srinagar were employed on these filatures, when firewood was used for boiling the the cocoons, yarn being spun out manually.

Kashmir had a small hydroelectric generating plant of about 15 MW, built downstream on the Jhelum river at Mahura, about 70 kilometres from Srinagar, even before the first world war started. Early in 1911 new power-driven machinery was being introduced. Only 2200 operators were needed now by the factory. Others were redundant—this in a city of less than 2 lakhs, in which apart from a few carpet weaving sheds no other enterprise of any size existed. One day, early in spring, the protesting workers staged a demonstration in Hazuri Bagh (now Iqbal Park), not far from the factory gate. The Kashmir administration could not tolerate such a massive protest by the workers, and used cavalry to disperse them. No one knows for certain the casualty figures. The only authentic record still available is a long narrative poem in a private collection, not published so far. The whole Valley vibrated in sympathy with the silk factory workers at this use of brute force against them. But none from the elite came out to guide and lead the workers openly.

There is sufficient evidence to indicate that the Residency experts were very much alive to the significance of this massive defiance of authority by workers in Srinagar, and on a purely class issue, which affected also non-Muslims in Jammu. They appear to have quickly thought out a plan of diverting mass anger into more acceptable channels, in harmony with their

own strategy of keeping the subjugation by communal strife. The same year Lord Reading, the Viceroy, was to visit the Valley in autumn. The Residency used its subterranean channels among the conservative families in the Valley to bring into focus the issue of Muslims being oppressed by a Hindu Maharaja. The drafting—even the typing of a document was left to one Mr. Siraj Din, a Punjabi Muslim, employed as Mir Munshee by the Residency in the state. Seven heads of influential Muslim families put their signatures on the petition. The petition complained of discrimination against Muslims, asked for larger representation in the services, even if Muslims have to be brought from outside the state, and the right to sell and mortgage landholdings in the Valley. Curiously the petition also demanded that the Resident be given back all the powers he had over the state administration until 1921, that made him a de facto dictator. However, there was no attempt at mobilization of the people for these demands. Only a very small number of people were taken into confidence about what was being planned. When the procession along the river carrying Lord Reading and the Maharaja in a boat through the city approached Shah Hamadan Shrine, black flags suddenly came up from the shrine, and a written petition was handed over to Lord Reading in mid-stream. After an interval the Maharaja externed three of the seven signatories from the state for a few years. They were Khwaja Sayid-Ud-Din Shawl, Khwaja Noor Shah Naqshbandhi, and Aga Syed Hassan Shah Jalali. The three also lost some of their privileges Others were let off lightly.

This incident had a clear message for the conservative upper stratum in Kashmir Valley. They could see that the British Resident or the Viceroy were unable to intervene openly in administration and dictate a particular course of action even to an Indian prince. Time was long passed when Pratap Singh in 1889, wrote to the Viceroy :

> "I would most humbly ask Your Excellency to summon me before you—and I will be most happy to obey such summons—and shoot me through the heart with Your

Excellency's hand, and thus at once relieve an unfortunate prince from unbearable misery, contempt, and disgrace for ever."

It was this lesson, which the old conservative families got from this episode which gave Sheikh Abdullah his chance in 1931, and brought thousands of political activists close to the working people into the forefront of the political struggle.

8. Maharaja Hari Singh

It has already been made clear that in the midst of a post-war anti-imperialist upsurge from 1919 onwards the British thought it wise to restore full powers to Pratap Singh, who had been forced to virtually abdicate in 1889. But with their characteristic duplicity what they gave with one hand they snatched with the other. A State Council of Ministers was formed. Hari Singh, in his capacity as heir apparent, was made the Senior Member of the Council, which amounted to being the Prime Minister of the State, and so wielding all power.

Hari Singh was the son of Raja Amar Singh, Pratap Singh's younger brother. Pratap Singh had been openly denouncing him as his chief enemy, who conspired with the Resident, and forged the letters used by the Resident to blackmail Pratap Singh, and force him to give up power on his own. Pratap Singh did not like Hari Singh to succeed him. He wanted to adopt another nephew, Jagat Dev Singh, as his heir. Although the British had bestowed a *sanad* on Ranbir Singh that he and his heirs would be free to adopt a son in case an issue failed, the British refused to allow Pratap Singh to adopt a son of his own choice to succeed him. They recognized Jagat Dev Singh as the son to Pratap Singh only for the purpose of religious ceremonies after his death ('water son'), but not his heir to the throne. Their choice for the *gadi* was Hari Singh, who had grown up under their close supervision, and was fully acceptable to them because of his father's background.

Pratap Singh felt so humiliated that he did not attend any meetings of the Council, and virtually took no part in the administration even after 1921, till his death in September 1925.

Once Hari Singh ascended the throne he tried to outsmart the British. It could be he wanted to undo the unsavoury record of the cynical and traitorous collusion of his father with the imperial government. He made an issue of the British right of flying the Union Jack wherever they liked. He got it replaced by the State flag in Gilgit, and everywhere else except the Srinagar Residency building. The Maharaja succeeded in recovering for his administration all the powers which the state administration had lost to the British. The state courts now had full criminal jurisdiction over all Indian visitors, and full civil jurisdiction over all persons in the state, irrespective of their nationality. The Residency courts no longer came into the picture. The state armed forces displaced the British-Indian troops in the Gilgit Agency. The Wazir-Wazarat, appointed by the state asserted his position and took charge of the administration in Gilgit Wazarat.

Maharaja Hari Singh pursued more vigorously the process of employing hereditary state subjects in the administration in preference to the people from outside, principally Punjab. In 1922 he took the initiative of setting up a committee to define a 'hereditary state subject' with legal precision. In June 1927 their recommendation was adopted, viz that hereditary state subjects include "all those born and residing within the state boundaries before the commencement of the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh Ji and those who settled therein before the commencement of Samvat 1984 (1885 A.D.), and have since been permanently residing therein". The Maharaja also issued an order that none who was not a "hereditary state subject" should be appointed to posts under the government without his own express permission. They are not normally also allowed to acquire immovable property in the state. It is interesting to note that this legislation continues to be in force to-day, and is protected by Article 370 of the Indian Constitution and the Delhi Pact of July 1952.

The Maharaja also initiated some improvements in educational and health facilities. A Scholarship Board was set up with a grant of Rs. 100,000 p.a. for training state subjects in British India or Europe. By convention 50% was reserved for Muslims. A sum of Rs. 10,000 p.a. was made available for industrial and vocational scholarships. The departments of agriculture, horticulture, sericulture and forestry were reorganized. Woollen textile and silk weaving industries started on a modest scale. A system of annual 'industrial and handicraft exhibitions' was started. The tourist industry got some attention along with fishing and hunting.

All this, of course, amounted to no more than eye-wash, considering the miserable plight of the vast majority of the people. But even this much did attract attention in the otherwise dismal non-performance of the overwhelming majority of the 600 odd Indian princes, who had been crushing the Indian population to a life of unending misery without a gleam of hope.

Some small concessions granted to the peasantry included a permission "to cut down trees growing in areas assessed to revenue" provided that the agriculturists did not sell them. The villagers were also allowed to remove dead and fallen timber throughout the year, as against only three months as in the earlier years. Some government land was also allotted to peasants. Land Alienation Act protected the tenant from being dispossessed of his holdings by money-lenders. Provision was also made for consolidation of holdings. Agricultural Relief Regulations of 1928 enabled the agriculturist debtor to take the creditor to court for a settlement of accounts, fixing a ceiling of 12 per cent p.a. on interest charged, with a ceiling also for total interest at 50 per cent of the principal. Some gestures were also made by way of social reform. Widow marriage was legalised in 1923. Temples were thrown open to Harijans in 1931. A lower age limit for marriage was fixed at 18 years for boys and 14 for girls.

Trivial as these concessions were, they were enough to sustain an illusion of slow reform, and inhibit the precipitation of a social upheaval except when unforeseen developments outside the state started operating.

However, imperialism has had its overwhelming interest in this area, and ever since 1846 did not miss an opportunity to have a decisive voice in all developments of any significance in this state. The first public indication that the Political Department was up to some mischief was given in a cunningly camouflaged manoeuvre in which Sir Albion Banerjee was their principal tool. He had been for a short while Hari Singh's minister. On March 15, 1929 he resigned and gave an interview to the Associated Press of India, in which he condemned Hari Singh's administration for callous treatment of his people—like "dumb driven cattle". He was not factually very much wrong. But a British administrator of his standing did not need to examine the situation in the state minutely to reach this conclusion. He could have blindly said the same thing—even worse things—about 600 odd Indian states, except for two or three, and even parts of British India. Nor would normally Associated Press of India and the Anglo-Indian English press be so keen to publicize his scathing attack on oppression and poverty in an Indian state. His interview provided a good start to a section of the Muslim press in Punjab, already upset by state subject legislation, who took up the cry, to demonstrate their concern for Kashmir Muslims. The Maharaja—a Hindu prince—was in the dock for crushing Muslims. To complete the picture the Hindu Mahasabha under Dr. Monje took up the cry of "Hindu Kingdom" in danger from Muslims, and threatened to avenge themselves in Hyderabad and Bhopal. Between them the two communal contenders were furthering the imperialist game of accentuating communal polarisation.

It does not seem Hari Singh took the hint He handed over Albion Banerjee's post to Mr. Wakefield, a Political Department expert on Kashmir. Hari Singh continued with his small gestures appropriate to a liberal-minded prince. A Flood Control Department was organised. Some relief was organised after the devastating flood of 1928. Letters Patent were granted to the State High Court and its status raised to that of High Courts in India.

Prominent Congress leaders, Jairam Dass Doulatram and Jamnalal Bazaz were received by Hari Singh and a loan of

Rs. 25,000 was given to All India Spinners' Association on concessional interest rates to organise 'Khadi' activity in the state. All this came to a climax in 1930 when in his address to the Round Table Conference in London on future Indian Constitution, Hari Singh identified himself with the national aspirations of the India people. The worst cut of all was the point he made of drawing the attention to 'the communal harmony in his state as a living example of how Hindus and Muslims could live peacefully like brethern'. This observation, in the context in which it was made, amounted to delivering a slap in the face of the British. It was an unpardonable sin, which the British imperial system could never have forgiven or forgotten. From Hari Singh it was an empty gesture, bravado of a 'princely patriot', himself steeped in parasitic feudal exploitation along with a whole clan of Rajput jagirdars and checkdars, a colossal burden on a rotten social structure. It is notable that while he made these quixotic gestures he had given charge of Home and Foreign portfolios to Mr. G.E.C. Wakefield, proxy of the Political Department in Delhi. He also allowed himself to be surrounded by a host of shady characters of doubtful loyalties. He was not alerted even by the several reported attempts at poisoning him. He could hardly see the contradiction between the symbolic challenge to imperialism, and the structure over which he was presiding. He allowed his administration to persecute the weekly 'Ranbir', the only newspaper in the state, when in its edition of May 7, 1930 it published an account of a big procession taken out in Jammu to protest against the arrest of Gandhi Ji, even though the processionists were also reported to be shouting 'long live Maharaja Bahadur'. To drive his point home he promulgated a Press Law in May 1932, which was analogous to the one prevailing in British India, intended to silence public opinion. We thus find in Hari Singh's whole career all the elements of self-destruction and defeat.

9. Preludes to An Upheaval

Just when the Great Depression (1929-1933) had hardly started, which was to paralyse, within a couple of years, the capitalist wor ld economy and devastate the colonial world—now referred to as 'developing countries'—the Indian National Congress met for its annual session on the banks of the Ravi in Lahore, and adopted the goal of 'complete independence of India from the British rule'. January 26, 1930 was celebrated as Independence Day, when every patriotic Indian took a solemn pledge not to rest till the goal of independence was achieved. The day continued to be celebrated every year from that time onwards. The president-designate of the session was Jawaharlal Nehru. In his presidential address to the session, among other things, he affirmed : "I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican, and no believer in kings and princes."

While the Congress was in session a convention of States' Peoples was held in the Bradlaugh Hall, presided over by P.L. Chudgar, a barrister, where the speakers gave details of the woes of the nearly 80 million people ruled by the 600 odd Indian princes.

During the year 1930 the annual sesssion of the A.I. Muslim League took place at Allahabad. Here Sir Mohammed Iqbal, for the first time, advocated the setting up of an autonomous Muslim state within India, as the goal for Indian Muslims to strive for. However, at the Round Table Conference in London the same year the Muslim leaders stuck merely to Mr. Jinnah's 14 Points, which did not envisage any Partition of India.

While the Round Table Conference was in session in London, an unknown student at Cambridge, one Choudhary Rahmat Ali, put forth the idea of a separate state of Pakistan to be set up under the benign patronage of the British, who did not hesitate recommending his scheme to the Muslim leaders assembled there. But the Muslim leaders did not show much interest. Even Mr. M.A. Jinnah described Mr. Rahmat Ali as an irresponsible person, and his plan a "crazy scheme". This did not, however, discourage the British bureaucrats who were obviously sponsoring the idea through the mouth of an unknown Muslim. When the Joint Select Committee of the British Parliament on Indian Constitutional Reforms met, Sir Reginald Craddcck, its Chairman, took the initiative to draw attention to Mr. Rahmat Ali's scheme. The record goes :

"*Question 9598*—Sir Reginald Craddock : I will pass on. If any of the delegates or the witneses would like to answer, will they tell me whether there is a scheme for the federation of provinces under the name of Pakistan ?

Answer for 9598—Abdullah Yusuf Ali C.B.E. : As far as I know it is only a student's scheme ; no responsible people put it forward.

Sir Reginald Craddock: They have not so far, but as you say, youadvance very quickly in India, and it may be when those students grow up, it will be put forward. That scheme must be in the minds of the people anyhow.

Mr. Zafrullah Khan : What is the question ?

Sir Reginald Craddock : I wanted to know whether the witnesses had acquaintance with a scheme, which was drawn up for what is called Pakistan.

Mr. Zafrullah Khan : We have already had the reply that it was a students' scheme and there is nothing in it. What is the further question ?

Question 9599 : Mr. Isac Foot : What is Pakistan ?

Answer 9599 : Mr. Zafrullah Khan : So far as we have considered it we have considered it chimerical and impracticable. It means the Federation of certain provinces.

Question 9600 : Sir Reginald Craddock : I have received communications about the proposals of forming certain Muslim states under the name of Pakistan.

Answer 9600 : Dr. Khalifa Shujauddin : Perhaps it will be enough to say that no such scheme has been considered by any representative gentleman or association so far."

(*Minutes of Evidence* before Joint Committee 1932-33)

The idea of a separate electorate for Muslims is known to have originated with Lord Dufferin and Mr. Beck, the Englishman who was the principal of Aligarh College, soon after the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Montagu-Chelmsford adopted communal electorate system from 1919 onwards.

It may be recalled here that the Muslim League had come into existence in 1907. Prior to this a deputation of Muslim leaders had visited Lord Curzon, the Viceroy. It is known that in organising this deputation Mr. Archbold, principal of the Aligarh College had taken a leading part.

A British official wrote to the Viceroy, Lord Minto : "I must send Your Excellency a line to say that a very, very big thing has happened today. A work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of 62 millions of people (Muslims) from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition (Congress)".

(Lady Minto, *India and Morley*, 1934 p. 47).

It probably was not an accident that the Hindu Maha Sabha also was founded about the same, time forming as it did a sort of strategic complement to the League. One recalls the concern of the British Home Secretary, Hamilton, conveyed to Curzon in a letter in 1899 :

"I think the real danger to our rule in India not now, but say 5o years hence, is the gradual adoption of Western agitation and organisation....The method to counter this threat....If we could break the Hindu educated party into two sections holding widely different views, we should, by such a division, strengthen our position against the subtle and continuous attack which the spread of education makes on our present system of government."

Presumably "Hindu educated party" refers to the Indian National Congress. This subtle process of organised disruption was carried further in the early twenties by furthering diversionary movements like *Shudhi* and *Tabligh*. These were sponsored respectively by the Arya Samaj and the Ahmadyas—followers of Mirza Mahmood Ahmad of Qadian, or *Mirzais*. Mirza Mahmood and Mirza Bashir Ahmad were known to have enjoyed British patronage. Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan was the best known among them, and rose to be the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, even though orthodox Muslims regard Ahmadias as heretics.

After the fading out of the Khilafat Movement, (1920-22; communal bitterness started becoming manifest, and the phenomenon of communal riots became part of the Indian political scene. The frequency and ferocity of these started increasing, and through this mechanism the lumpen elements, with influential support in the background, began to seize the initiative in channelising political trends. The riot that broke out in Cawnpore in 1927 was unprecedented in ferocity. A wellknown freedom fighter Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was stabbed to death during the riot while trying to quell it. The process continued, and only kept on shifting from province to province, from city to city or town, mostly in Northern India, Hyderabad State and Bombay.

The culmination came in August 1946 in the Calcutta killings, Noakhali riots, and later the holocaust of August 1947 when the country was partitioned into two dominions, a million from the two communities perished in a mass frenzy, and ten million got displaced from their native homes to become refugees in the two new dominions cut out by the British out of the old Indian state. It was then that Gandhi Ji cried in agony :

"I do not understand how all these terrible things are happening in our country. For many years the Congress has struggled and grown, and now, after we have reached the pinnacle, somehow these horrible things are happening, and the Congress is not able to do anything effective to stop them. What mistakes have we made, for we must have

made mistakes? Otherwise how could all these things happen? It seems that while we were building the Congress at the same time it was decaying, and to-day it is obvious that it has decayed, because it is not able to fight all the bad things that are going on in India....Everything looks dark to me; very dark, and I see very little hope. Some people say that after the dark night comes the bright dawn; but I do not know when the dawn will come."

Going back to 1930, one may recall the failure of the Round Table Conferences in London in 1930-32. The British Government later drew up on its own a federal constitution for India, known as the Government of India Act of 1935. The first part of the constitution concerned the Indian states i.e., the autonomous federal units. The second part concerned the central government controlling the whole country. Princely states also were to be represented in the Federal Assembly, forty per cent of its membership being assigned to them. The franchise was restricted by educational and property requirements, so that only about 11 per cent of the electorate would be entitled to vote.

In 1937, the first part of this constitution came into operation after a general election held in 1936 in the British administered part of the country. The Muslim League was not able to form a ministry in any of the eleven provinces that comprised British India—not even in Bengal or Punjab, or the North Western Frontier Province. The Congress got a majority in seven major provinces, including the N.W.F.P. This was a signal for the Muslim League to accentuate communal frenzy by all possible means, including riots, to cause and deepen the estrangement of the Muslims from the national mainstream. With all the levers of power still in British hands, and their placemen in every community at their beck and call, it was not difficult to achieve the necessary degree of disruption in the country. Their achievement is a historical fact, and this has been the single most potent negative factor in an otherwise colossal liberation wave of the past several decades in the subcontinent. An important milestone of this disruptionist strategy was the 1940 session of the All India Muslim League at Lahore.

It was in this session that a demand for the partition of India into several states was formally made for the first time. It could certainly not be a sheer coincidence that Chaudhery Rahmat Ali surfaced again about this time. He came out with a publication : *Millat of Islam and the Menace of Indianism.* This publication made out a case for the break up of India, and setting up of three sovereign Muslim states :

1. Pakistan in the North-west, 2. Bang-i-Islam in the east, and 3. Osmanistan (i.e., Nizam's state) in the south. Two years later, in 1942 he came out with another pamphlet entitled *Millat and the Mission* published, not without significance, at Cambridge again, in 1944. It takes one's breath away today to find a heading in this pamphlet, viz, *Avoid Minoritism*, with its elucidation that after partition there should be no minorities in the divided parts. This can be easily recognised as the guiding theory of the partition riots in August 1947. While our national leaders were totally taken aback by the calamity, as one might by a destructive earthquake or a cyclone, one can guess the diabolical overtones of what the West Punjab Governor, Sir Francis Mudie, desperately wrote to Jinnah several weeks after the partition : "I am telling everyone that I don't care how the Sikhs get across the border, the great thing is to get rid of them as soon as possible. There is still little sign of 3 lakh Sikhs in Lyallpur moving, but in the end they too will have to go." In setting Lyallpur ablaze by this provocation Sir Francis was applying the same principle as the one, i.e., "Avoid Minoritism", expounded by the mysterious Chaudhery Rahmat Ali, in 1942. Incidentally, the timing of its publication at Cambridge coincided with the expected meeting between Gandhiji and Mohammad Ali Jinnah to settle the communal problem, and thus pave the way for the independence of the country. It was not only Mudie who remembered the principle when he found the Sikhs in Lyallpur still reluctant to move; it was the numerous commissioners, D.C.'s, police commissioners and their many allies who had made meticulous preparations—unsuspected by our national leaders—for the unprecedented communal carnage and bestiality just when the Mountbatten Award started being implemented.

PART II

Awakening and After

(1931-1980)

10. The Great Upheaval of 1931

From the foregoing one can clearly see that the whole thrust of imperialist strategy in India after the Mutiny was to accentuate the division between Hindus and Muslims in the country, and also divisions within the communities. They were quite thorough in their methodologies as well as in execution. A perverted use of scient ific methodology has taught them to study their victims through many eyes, with great care, patience, and quite unobstrusively. Their moves have had a wide range, from the manipulation of appointments, promotions, presents, feeding greed, envy or malice or ambition, inventing special electoral tricks like the separate electorate, but easily moving to coldblooded organisation of mass murder by using police-underworld nexus, or unscrupulous demagogues as their tools.

The long road towards 'Mountbatten Award' started in about 1906, when the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasaha were founded. Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in 1919 introduced communal electorate system. Punjab Muslims practically did not take part in the Khilafat Movement, and worked for the Montagu reforms. Hindu organisations bitterly opposed them, thus widening the cleavage between the communities. In the process a police-underworld nexus perfected the art of rioting, stabbing of innocent people at street corners, loot and incendiarism all under the cover of religious bigotry, sustained by appropriate mullahs and other demagogues. The upper crust among the Muslims were well represented in the army and the bureaucracy.

The whole initiative was with the British. Mr. Wall Khan has done great service recently in unearthing some evidence for this *Facts Are Fact*—Vikas, 1987. In all their schemings and long-term projections Kashmir always had an important place. Within a decade of the foundation of Jammu and Kashmir State they had taken, as already seen in this narrative, good note of the mischief potential in a state where a Hindu Maharaja ruled over a Muslim majority area. They had also grasped the strategic potential of the state from the point of view of domination over Central Asia, and its economic exploitation. After 1918 there was also the specific purpose of tightening the iron curtain over the land of Socialism, and subjecting their own subjects in the subcontinent to their campaign of slander and disinformation about the true face of real socialism. These aims were and still are at the root of all imperialist policies in regard to the subcontinent. The only thing that is new in this is that from 1949 onwards the initiative has gone from the British to the United States, their main purpose being harmoniously blended, as those of fellow predators and for neo colonial domination of the subcontinent.

It has been stated that the Resident ceased to have direct and absolute power over the state administration of the J & K State in 1921, when they had also lost their privileged position in Afghanistan. By 1925, Central Asia was undergoing a renewal as part of the new world of socialism, and so beyond redemption for imperialism. The Soviet Union was getting consolidated rapidly. Maharaja Hari Singh, hitherto sponsored by the British, started being too intractable for them in many ways, and therefore needed reining in to make him sufficiently docile, in order to face the perilous days that the British had every reason to expect throughout their empire. They had not, however, failed to notice that he was childless and so the line would end with him. There were rumours of attempted poisoning.

In 1928, however, Hari Singh married again, specifically, it was whispered, to have by hook or by crook an heir to the *gadi*. In 1930, it was declared that a baby was expected, but that the Maharani would go to France for the delivery. The British camp felt cheated. This time, however, they did not demand to get the Maharani examined by their nominee as

they did once in the case of Pratap Singh's Maharani. In March 1931, it was announced from France that Maharani Tara Devi had delivered a son. It produced quite a stir in the upper crust of the state. For the British, the disappointment caused by this event was particularly heavy because the unfolding of the first five year plan of the U.S.S.R., and the collectivisation of its agriculture sector made the imperialist camp very despondent, and furious preparations for an anti-Soviet war were in full swing on a global scale. The Nazis had been allowed to take over Germany and Japan was encouraged to subjugate China. The new situation demanded tight control over the state. The J & K State and particularly its northern areas were therefore, very much in the mind of the British strategists, who would need a very pliable administration governing the state, if not complete control as they had up to 1921. Meanwhile the Great Depression, starting in 1929, got quickly deepened. The Kashmir economy was found to be very sensitive to this development. High-valued handicrafts—carpets, embroidered goods, felt mattings, papier-mache, carved silver and wood-work, precious and semi-precious jewellery—have had their market mostly in western countries. It is only the shawls, *pashmina* goods, dry and fresh fruit, saffron which are sold mostly in the Indian subcontinent. So in 1930 the whole economy took a sudden downturn. This was compounded by depression in agricultural prices on a global scale. Paddy would not fetch Rs. 2 per "ass load" (about 75 kilogrammes) in the market while the people starved. The situation thus took a turn for which there were few precedents in terms of starvation and destitution even in the long and chequered history of the state. A major mass explosion was quite on the cards, the only moot point was what shape it would take and whom it would hit. That depended on who would be able to snatch the leadership, and what direction it would take.

There was no political organisation in the state except one, called Dogra Sabha, reflecting the viewpoint of the small educated intelligentsia of Jammu province. A few Kashmiri educated people also were associated with it. The thrust of their activity was against the non-Kashmiri influx into the state service, especially since Urdu supplanted Persian in the

administration and the courts. The right to organise or to publish newspapers had not been conceded as yet. There was only one newspaper in Jammu; though liberal, nationalist in outlook, it had to be visibly loyal to the ruling prince. Some educated Kashmiris had been criticising the state government in the British Indian press, but were ineffective and had to give up. There was, however, a certain tradition of collective action in villages in an ad hoc manner on a popular issue. But such struggles could not involve large areas, because of the enforced isolation of villages, and other barriers of language and culture. Srinagar had seen large mass actions in 1848 and 1865. These involved mainly the shawl weavers and their apprentices, and were in the nature of sharp explosions of protest and not long-drawn-out struggles. Popular discontent was often utilised by some personages of the elite for their own ends, and this also provided a safety valve. This is what happened when a demonstration was made before Lord Reading in 1924. But the outcome was such that the conservative, propertied families became more circumspect, and refrained from sticking out their necks by a sudden impulse. Their demand for full powers for the Resident was hardly worth shouting about.

It happened that about the year 1930 a dozen or so of Kashmiri Muslim young men had just finished their graduate or postgraduate studies, and had not been offered a gazetted post, which they believed they had every reason to expect. They had also not been selected for higher studies abroad, when a group of 20 or so was so chosen just about that time. They therefore nursed a grievance. All being Muslims, they believed they had been discriminated against because of their religious affiliation, non-Muslims being, in fact, strongly entrenched in the bureaucracy, and the Maharaja also being a non-Muslim. They set up a reading room as a convenient cover for their meetings and other activities. Already in 1930, there was a sudden spurt of publications in British administered Punjab exclusively devoted to publicising and highlighting the misery and oppression over Kashmiri Muslims, and calling on Muslims to unite and overthrow the Hindu Maharaja, and deliver his Muslim subjects from his

oppression. Among the prominent Muslims associated with this campaign were Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Sir Fazal Hussain, Sir Mohammad Shafi, and Mirza Bashir Ahmad of Qadian, head of the Ahmediya sect. None of them was associated with anti-British-rule freedom struggle or anti-landlord pro-peasant struggles.

Among the dozen or so educated Kashmiri young men based in Kashmir was one, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who got his M. Sc. degree in Chemistry from the Aligarh Muslim University in 1930. He had spent six years (1924-1930) in Lahore and Aligarh for his graduation and post-graduate studies. He may have been the first young man with a postgraduate science degree who was not appointed straight away on a gazetted post, nor selected for higher studies abroad on a government scholarship. Instead, he was appointed to the post of a science teacher in a high school on Rs. 80 p.m. It is possible that for his six years' studies outside the state he was dependent on his step-brothers or some Muslim welfare organisations in Punjab. His whole life had been rather hard. An orphan brought up by a young widowed mother and step-brothers who were small shawl merchants. He was very religious and enjoyed reciting the *Quran* in a pleasant tune. He was also very hardy. After primary school he had to go for his schooling and two years' college education, several miles from his home, day in and day out. He was very much influenced by the Prophet's life, and loved reciting Sir Mohammad Iqbal's Urdu poetry. During his stay in Lahore he could not have missed the miserable plight of the Kashmiri peasant, crushed by an iniquitous agrarian system, and total lack of civil rights, and a background of centuries old oppression of a small, weak, but gifted national group invariably feeling helpless at the onslaught of marauders from outside, not able to defend its independence, yet occupying an attractive piece of land, accessible from all directions and enjoying many blessings of nature.

The campaign that started in Punjab against the oppression of Kashmiri Muslims by a Hindu Maharaja in 1930, gathered greater momentum after the Maharaja's return from France along with his new-born son. The Reading Room Party, on

their part also supplied current news and other material about the oppression. In return they received the printed material from Punjab which they circulated and displayed in the Valley, largely in Srinagar itself. It did succeed in creating quite a stir in a few months among a people accustomed for long to a passive submission to oppression. Alongside there were other happenings on all too familiar a pattern of abduction, rape, desecration of the Holy *Quran*, mosques, and sacrilege in other ways. All this was clearly calculated to accentuate communal bitterness, polarisation of communities as antagonistic entities rather than a united front of the oppressed against oppressors and social parasites of all hues.

In the spring of 1931, a Pathan young man, Abdul Qadeer, appeared as if from nowhere, in the capacity of a cook of a young English military officer posted in NWFP. He got up on the platform in the compound of Shah-i-Hamadan shrine, when most of the conservative Muslim elite had collected there, and addressed a large audience. His was a vitriolic speech against the Hindu Maharaja, and exhorted the Muslims to get rid of him. He was arrested soon after this and it provided an occasion for the mobilisation of Muslims in the Valley for his release. It was while he was being tried in the Srinagar jail premises that a vast concourse of people tried to gate-crash on July 13, 1931. The armed police there resorted to firing. Probably seventeen fell down dead immediately, and several died afterwards. Blood flowed, but the people were not demoralised. They carried their dead on *charpais* (cots) taken from the police lines outside the jail wall. It was the first time in modern times that the working people of Kashmir had confronted the coercive machine of their oppressor bravely and shed their own blood consciously for their own freedom from oppression. It was a landmark. It cured them of the fear of bullets and gave them a clear feeling of the dormant strength born of solidarity and collective action. No known leader of the people was present on the spot, though people had been publicly exhorted to attend the jail trial. If they had sent any instructions it could only be through messengers, who maintained their anonymity even afterwards.

The mass of people carried the dead to *Jumma Masjid* 1-2 kilometres away. It is not clear how a large batch decided to go further to Maharaj Gunj—the wholesale market where Punjabi Khattri traders have their shops. Somehow rioting and looting started there. Another batch took a longer route, to a village called Vicharnag with a concentration of non-Muslims, some of them moneylenders. Looting took place here, but nowhere else in the Valley. It is curious that the *Daily Telegraph* (London) felt disappointed that in a whole afternoon of rioting only three people lost their lives.

Mr. Wakefield, Minister for Foreign as well as Home portfolios, was nowhere to be found while all this was happening in the capital. The police chief spent his time in his search. Later in the evening he was found to have been closeted with the Resident. The Maharaja himself came to know of the developments allegedly late in the evening. In panic he mobilised his bodyguard to control the city.

It was only when the martyrs were brought to *Jumma Masjid* that the leaders including Sheikh Abdulla and Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah appeared in public. The following day Sheikh Abdulla and five others associated with the Reading Room, were arrested and put in the Srinagar Fort (Hari Parbat) as state prisoners.

The Riot Enquiry Committee that was set up soon afterwards collected much evidence about the happenings of July 13, 1931 and the preceding few weeks. There is some evidence in the report particularly the evidence of one Khwaja Abdul Aziz (witness No. 89, exhibit 104), which shows that Mr. Wakefield played the double role of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde during the course of a few months in 1931.

The events in Kashmir provided fresh opportunities for the communalist organisations in British India, particularly in Punjab, to incite communal hatred. Muslims wanted to liberate the Maharaja's Muslim subjects from his rule. The Hindu Mahasabha wanted to defend the Hindu Maharaja against the Muslim onslaught, and in its annual session at Akola threatened to avenge themselves in Hyderabad and Bhopal, in case Hindu rule in Jammu and Kashmir came to harm. There was, however, the lone cry of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who

raised his voice against the British Imperialists...for projecting the movement as a "result of dispute between Hindus and Muslims" (*Al Jamiat*, 13 August, 1931 p. 5).

The intensity and the depth of the mass upheaval in the Valley during July-September, 1931, paralysing for a while the whole administrative machinery, and the fearlessness shown by the common people, including women and children, to face armed forces, was a colossal surprise for friend and foe alike. It appeared to have perturbed even the experts of the Political Department in Delhi. So we find Syed Meher Shah, heir-apparent of Nawab Sir Meher Shah, founder of a religious sect called *Hizibi-Ullah* hurrying to the Valley to bring about a truce between the parties, and generally lower the confrontation level.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah informs us (*Atash-e-Chinar* pp 104-105) that Sir Meher Shah had made the British recruitment campaign in the first World War a great success in Punjab by issuing amulets claiming that anyone wearing them would not be hit by a bullet. The truce he negotiated did not bring about peace in the Valley. However a schism did appear in the leadership, the conservative sections associated with Moulvi Yusuf Shah, started demarcating themselves from the new set of younger people thrown up by the upheaval, and now having a following of their own among the masses. Gradually the schism began to be felt throughout the Valley. But an unusual event in the September of that year was when some mysterious agency encouraged the people to collect at a place near Dastgir shrine, with any arms they could lay hands on, to save some personages from arrest. The people did this without any inhibitions or fear. They are said to have been unobtrusively photographed while the police and the army disappeared from the city. The following day a flag march of the army under Brigadier Sutherland took place, and a draconian ordinance was promulgated to crush the spirit of the people. The city was virtually handed over to the army, and repression let loose, under Burmese Ordinance (19L) including lashes on bare skin of all new militants they could lay hands on. After some weeks of uninhibited repression amnesty was declared on October 3, 1931.

The leaders were released, and all communities were invited to submit their grievances to the Maharaja.

By then the discontent had spread to Jammu (non-Kashmiri speaking) province. Jammu is closer to Punjab geographically, linguistically and culturally. The agrarian situation there was much more acute. The rural economy was dominantly feudal. Also, Jammu landowners enjoyed the right to sell or mortgage their holdings, which those in the Valley did not have. Besides, the peasant in Jammu did not have the option to sell his surplus grain to the government at a fixed price, which remained steady for more than a decade, which had been available in Kashmir since 1922. This was the outcome of the unusual development in 1921, when a co-operative was organised by an enlightened, liberal-minded civil servant (Srinagar Granaries; later Food Control Department) to purchase surplus paddy from the grower at a price fixed in advance, and distributed as rations to citizens in Srinagar, also at a reasonable price, almost on a 'no profit no loss' basis. This unique institution was always disliked by the British as interference in free market operations.

One noticeable feature of the 1931 upheaval was that it threw up a new leadership of the people in Kashmir. They were mostly from the lower-middle class and not the old established propertied families. A dominant section of the trading community supported them, but preferred to remain relatively in the background. Lower down there was quite a groundswell. Motor drivers, carpet weavers, embroiderers, artisans of every type, silk factory workers and tonga drivers provided the active cadre. For a short while (1931-34), even people's courts functioned unofficially, and a strong volunteer corps helped in collecting funds and enforcing decisions, organising relief to the sufferers, and generally keeping up the morale of the people. It is amazing how rapidly the old established family of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah lost its influence over large sections of the Muslim population. As late as March, 1931 when his predecessor on the *gadi* Moulvi Ahmad Ullah passed away, hardly a Muslim family in Srinagar cooked its meal to mourn his death, and almost all the able-bodied joined the funeral procession, while in 1933 he had to be escorted by strong-arm men even

within the perimeter of half a kilometre from his own residence. For his prominent followers among the propertied families some pockets of Srinagar were no better than death traps. They could not save themselves fromphysical assault. The schism rent the Muslim community in towns into two factions; even marriage contracts were dissolved in some cases. Personally Moulvi Yusuf Shah was of about the same age as Sheikh Abdullah. He had spent several years in Deoband Seminary of Islamic Studies, where he was exposed to the influence of those who had been involved in the *Khilafat* movement of 1920-1922. Professionally he was quite good as a preacher, and had a good command of the Kashmiri language. In his last years in Pakistan (in the sixties) he produced a translation of the *Quran*, which is an important contribution to the development of Kashmiri prose. With all this, he did not have the makings of a martyr or a leader. He was used to an easy, luxurious life, to which according to prevailing conventions he was entitled, and had a vested interest in orthodoxy.

Having taken up the Mir Waizship in 1931 he did feel a responsive chord with what the Muslim young men of the Reading Room said and felt. But he was not one who would burn his boats with the Maharaja. To have the best of both the worlds he allowed the young men to be around him whenever he went for preaching. After finishing his piece he would casually inform the audience that recently a few young men had returned after finishing their studies outside the state. They would like to share their thoughts with them, and the people might find these interesting. With this short recommendation he would leave the audience, and allow the Reading Room group to address the people in their own way. However, under such auspices the young men also were careful what they said and how they put it across, not to tread on anyone's toes. Sheikh Abdullah was obviously their leader.

One day a particular incident in the spring of 1931 proved to be of decisive significance in his career. We quote from his autobiography (pages 68-69, first Urdu edition) :

"The Muslim Young Men's Association of Jammu had issued a poster denouncing the alleged desecration of the

Quran by a police sub-inspector in Jammu. One Mohammed Ismail had been caught by the police pasting it near the fourth bridge (Zaina Kadal) in Srinagar. They led him in handcuffs towards the police station close by. A large mass of people followed the police. I joined them. The mass of people assumed such a threatening posture that the policemen felt scared and let him off. I led the whole concourse in a procession towards the Jumma Masjid. I was accompanied by Moulvi Abdul Rahim and Ghulam Nabi Gilkar (both prominent leaders of the Ahmadiya sect)....We entered the mosque, and two CID inspectors in unifor m also came in. Some people were so scared at this that they tried to leave. But there were others who stopped them and brought them back. For the first time I had the chance of addressing this concourse freely according to my own lights. I recited in a spirited manner an emotional composition of Aga Hasher Kashmiri (a dramatist, a pioneer of the Lahore stage). I also recited pieces from the Quran. Then I aroused them and promised on behalf of the whole 'Reading Room' group "to carry on the agitation till the desecraters of the Quran were punished, and all the grievances of Muslims were removed in a satisfactory manner. This was a thunderbolt, and it changed the fate of Kashmir....When I finished and moved towards my modest living room in the heart of the city – Sheikh Saheb was still a teacher on Rs. 80 p.m. at that time—a mass of ten thousand accompanied me, and at my door step begged me for one more speech before parting."

For Sheikh Saheb it was like Ala Din getting hold of the famous magic lamp. He understood in a flash that power did not lie in the carpeted *diwan-khanas* of big khowjas, wrapped in *pashmina du-shawls*. It was here in Srinagar streets where ragged, bare-footed, illiterate mass of people were desperately seeking a way out of their misery without end. They did find some solace in the preaching of Mir Waizes, several of them trained preachers and versed in Islamic history. This made them even weep, and frequently entranced. Sheikh Saheb learned to do all this in no time. But his religious fervour carried

greater conviction with the masses. His recitations almost held them spell-bound. Above all he did something which the professional preachers did not dare to do. He broadcast the message of struggle. He exhorted them that they must fight their oppressors with their fists. He told them fearlessly that every brick thrown at them must be answered with a stone. This message fitted so well with many powerful couplets in Iqbal's poetry, which he would sing with great verve and passion. No doubt the whole plebian mass decided he was their man, the deliverer they were waiting for. Sheikh Saheb discovered that he was in fact the "Lion of Kashmir" with this magic lamp in his grasp. In later years he would himself say that after Yusuf Chak—the king subdued and murdered by the Moghuls in Akbar's time—he was the first Kashmiri to go about with his head erect. The emotional compact between him and the working people of Srinagar, including most of those in skilled trades, and a large section of the small and middle level trading community, became a powerful factor in Kashmir politics, and threw into the background the older established families including the Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. This influence soon spread to small towns and villages in the Valley. It was not long before Sheikh Saheb came to believe in his own uniqueness, as the Chosen One, to carry out a historic task. Everyone else was only to provide auxiliary help; otherwise he was obviously a traitor.

The old elite felt scared at the emergence of this new phenomenon : A person "without hearth and home", a mere teacher, but tall in stature, commanding the devoted allegiance of hundreds of thousands of people in such a short time. They looked for opportunities to make up with the autocratic regime They banded themselves behind Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah, the only one with real access to a significant section of the people. The first shot fired by the Mir Waiz was as early as September 11, 1931, when he said (without naming anyone) :

> "Those who do not follow the canons of Islam will never progress....Those who do not know the different aspects of the meaning of the Arabic language can interpret the Quran wrongly."

Sheikh Abdullah used to shave of his beard and knew neither Persian nor Arabic. Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah found his chance and hit on Sheikh Abdulla's real or alleged closeness to Ahmadiyas, whom orthodox Sunnis regard as heretics. Sheikh Sahib also showed great skill in rallying to his side a large number of religious personalities – in fact the next two most prominent Moulvis by status, viz, Mir Waiz Hamadani and Mir Maqbool Jeelani, the only ones who could be regarded to be rivals of Mir Waiz Yusuf Shah. A large section of traders also rallied to him, especially those who had made their fortunes only in the preceding decade or two (*German Khojas*) and still needed social recognition. As early as 1932, Sheikh Saheb married Akbar Jan, who had received education in a convent school in Murree, near Rawalpindi. She was the daughter of Harrie Nedou, a British citizen, who along with his brother ran European hotels in Srinagar, Gulmarg and Lahore He had got converted to Islam to marry a Gujjar lady of Tangmarg area and settled there. The marriage enabled him to acquire land and immovable property, which was not possible otherwise according to law. A local mystic is said to have brought about the marriage. This mystic saint, Syed Mirak Shah Kashani, has been an influential figure, though always in the background, of Kashmir politics.

Although the Mir Waiz failed to regain most of his lost influence, Ahmadiya influence in the 1931 movement did become a subject of controversy inside the movement itself. The Ahrars, who organised marches of thousands of volunteers from Punjab into the state in the autumn of 1931, were the first to take a lead in denouncing the Ahmadiya role in Kashmir. The Ahrars had an anti-British orientation, while the Ahmadiyas were known to enjoy British patronage. Moulana Mohammad Sayyid, then a lecturer in Persian in the Srinagar College, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, a young employee of All India Spinners' Association, Mir Ghulam Ahmad Gilani, the younger brother of Mir Maqbool Gilani, *Sajjida Nashin* of Peer Dastgir shrine in Srinagar and Mohi-uddin Kara, were the leading lights of this group. They were generally critical of the Punjabee role in the 1931-32 movement. In 1933, they launched an agitation

on their own without the participation of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, known as "Nowjawan Agitation". It was mercilessly suppressed. For the first time severe prison sentences were inflicted on the leaders, and they were made to serve their terms in full and pay fines—something that had not happened up to that time during those years of great turmoil. The places chosen for their imprisonment were also particularly troublesome.

11. The Demands — An Anti-climax

We go back to our story in the autumn of 1931, when the Maharaja invited all communities among his subjects to submit their grievances and demands for his consideration. This was a fair challenge to the leaders of the 1931 agitation. They did submit their demands. Strange as it may seem, no one in Kashmir, from Sheikh Saheb downwards, has claimed to have drafted the document. A meeting of the prominent workers had been called, but no one offered to put down a word on paper. Then a certain gentleman, introduced to those present under the name of 'Abdul Rahim' from Punjab, took out a draft and put it down before the audience. Everyone agreed it was the correct one, and so it was adopted at once. This gentleman has never figured in any political activity openly in the state either before or after this meeting. The full draft, several thousand words, also appeared in the *Statesman* of Calcutta (Oct. 1931), occupying nearly a whole page. A closer look of the document is, however, of great significance, and gives food for thought. At the very outset the document avers :

> "Excepting for the Royal Person of Your Highness the Moslem subjects of the state have rightly or wrongly lost all confidence in the officials of the state, to the extent they cannot even wait till such time as may be required for the framing of a reformed constitution, and its subsequent introduction...
>
> "Your Highness' subjects most respectfully submit that no permanent peace is possible unless the same law be enforced

in the state for the freedom of speech and for the establishment of Anjumans and Associations as obtain in British India...

"A declaration may kindly be made immediately to the effect that there would be perfect religious freedom in the state, and that conversion would entail no manner of disability whatever...

"Your Highness' subjects can live in peace only when they have been conceded the right to an effective share in the legislation of the state, and of criticizing the administration. Any legislation to secure this end would, however, require a long time. But Your Highness' Muslim subjects, and as far as we know a section of...Hindu and Sikh subjects as well, think it necessary that a definite assurance may be given to them to the effect that *in future* they would be treated in accordance with *some definite constitution*. ..This constitution must ensure...*eternal* and *unchanging* elementary rights of humanity....(and)

(*i*) Perfect religious freedom in respect of religious observances, practice, speech, conversion and the rights connected therewith,...

(*ii*) Perfect freedom of association, of setting up of Anjumans, *excepting* of course such Anjumans as have for their object the subversion of law of constitutional authority.

(*iii*) Perfect freedom of speech *subject to action under the law of sedition*, or libel, or such restrictions *as the requirements of public tranquillity may necessitate*.

(*iv*) Freedom of the Press with only such necessary restrictions as obtain in British territory...the state authorities should have no objection to the circulation within the state of Muslim papers from outside. We see no reason why, against all usage of civilized countries the state should object to stopping (sic) the circulation of such papers as criticize in the public interest, and with due deference to the person of Your Highness, the attitude and behaviour of some of its officials, or

point out defects in the existing laws and regulations of the state.

(*v*) There should be no discriminative laws in the state based on religion or racial considerations in the interest of, or to the detriment of any particular people.

(*vi*) The life and property of every person in the state so far as he does not infringe any of the *existing* laws, should be guaranteed and, further, the state or its officials, should be liable to be sued in a law court... in case of any violation of the law on their parts...."

In regard to the future constitution the Memorandum made the following demands :

"The *Ministers* shall, of course, be *appointed by the Ruling Chief*, but the Moslems should be represented in the Ministry in proportion to their numerical strength...

"If capable Moslems from among the Moslem subjects of the state are not available to fill the posts, recruitment should be made from the *Moslems outside the state* until the time when the Moslems of Kashmir become sufficiently advanced to be appointed as Ministers...

"The Ministers shall *be responsible* to the *Maharaja Bahadur*, but if the representatives of the country shall demand from them any information concerning their respective departments they shall be bound to furnish the required information to the legislature *except* with regard to matters connected with the person of Maharaja Bahadur, or such foreign affairs as the Maharaja Bahadur *may think wise not to disclose*.... Though the Ministers would not be responsible to the legislature yet they should be instructed by the Maharaja Bahadur in the letter of appointment to respect the opinion of the majority and to act in conformity with it so far as possible...

(*vii*) After the Legislative Assembly has been constituted no new laws which have not been passed by the said Assembly...shall be enforced in the country, *excepting such temporary Ordinance as the Maharaja Bahadur may enforce on occasions of violent disturbances or*

grave emergencies ; but such Ordinances shall not remain in force for more than six months.

"70% of the members of the Assembly shall be elected and 30% nominated by H.H. the Maharaja Bahadur...

"Rules shall be framed in (such) a way that the elected representatives of the different religions are returned in proportion to the number of their respective adherents...

"As regards the franchise the election *shall for the present* be made through the Municipalities and District Boards...

"No new tax shall be imposed nor any of the old taxes enhanced without first obtaining the sanction of the Assembly. In special circumstances, however, the Maharaja Bahadur *shall have the power to do so by a special 'Firman'* if he finds the work of the administration suffering. H.H. the Maharaja Bahadur *shall also have the power of veto* in legislation...

"The Municipal Committees and the District Boards should have the same duties and powers as in the Punjab...

"Land revenue should be assessed on the same lines as in Punjab...

"Public Service Commission for all gazetted posts.. H.H. the Maharaja Bahadur *should have the power* to appoint 25% of the total number of the higher grade posts directly...

"The zamindars of Kashmir are deprived of the proprietary rights over their lands, whereas those of Jammu fully enjoy those rights. The people of Kashmir *cannot sell or mortgage* their lands of their own will. They *cannot even cut* the mulberry, the walnut, and the chinar trees on their private lands....We, therefore, request Your Highness to be more graciously pleased to restore Your Highness' Zamindar subjects their *full proprietary rights*...

"Keeping in view the advancement of the times and the noble example already set by some of the ruling chiefs, particularly those of Cochin and Mysore...will inspire Moslem subjects...with even stronger feelings of loyalty and devotion."

The whole document, it can be seen, presents a touch of bathos considering that the demands were being presented after an unprecedented mass upheaval, in which the whole state machine got paralysed, for at least a whole afternoon, and at least seventeen fell down facing bullets. Whoever drafted this unusual document appears to have been anxious not to be too demanding, nor to create expectations among the masses, beyond what the Government of India Act of 1935 was eventually to concede, four years later, from the point of view of the level of democratization of the administration and devolution of power to the people. In fact these demands did not reach even the level which the British Government accepted as the guideline for making its own offer a few years later. The only economic demand of any importance was the demand for the right *to sell* or *mortgage* an agricultural holding by the owner. The beneficiary in this case could only be one with surplus capital to invest, and of course moneylenders and speculators in agricultural commodities. It certainly facilitates the creation of landless peasantry, and thus cheaper labour power. One cannot also fail to notice that the *Statesman* of Calcutta found space to publish the whole document in full.

The Maharaja readily conceded all the demands for annulment of those with blatantly discriminatory implications against the Muslims as a community, e.g., the sequestration of some mosque (e.g., Pather Masjid and Khankah-i-Sokhta in Srinagar). The services of the British expert Mr. B.J. Glancy of the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India, were requisitioned to head a Commission of Enquiry into the grievances of the people. The Maharaja also acquiesced in having a British nominee (Col. B.J. Colvin) as his Prime Minister, Mr Wakefield having voluntarily left the state after the exposure of his sinister role inm anipulating the events of July 13, 1931.

The particular shape that the events of 1931 took did bring about communal polarisation in the state. Since there were better organised agencies in Punjab and elsewhere in India, belonging to both communities, the events were used on a big scale to communalize the atmosphere all over India. The real sufferings of the exploited masses and their real interests got

lost in the din of accusations and recriminations. The impressive self-sacrificing and fearless qualities of the Srinagar working people, men, women and children that came out for the first time in a dramatic fashion, remained unrecognized for quite a while.

The agrarian situation in the part of the state outside the Kashmir Valley was even more suited to convert agrarian dis-content into communal strife. The fact that the peasants had all the rights of an owner on land and so could sell or mort-gage it – unlike the peasant in the Valley—resulted frequently in the loss of land by a Muslim tenant in the Kandi areas to a Hindu *sahookar*. So in Mirpore, Kotli and Poonch, Muslim peasants in looting and burning moneylenders and Sahookars, were doing all this to Hindus. People from across the border-line could also come and participate in it. Control was restored when the Maharaja had to eat humble pie and sign on the dotted line, and leave it to the British army to restore order. It was Mr. Jarkar I.C.S. who took charge of the administration and then the Viceroy enacted an ordinance for the suppression of activities in the British administered Punjab for interference in Jammu and Kashmir state affairs. The Maharaja, however, did grant a remission of a substantial part of the land revenue because of the depression in agricultural prices.

In the whole gloomy scene of the years 1931-33 there is one incident at least which is unique. A communal riot broke out in Srinagar in the summer of 1932, which lasted for four days. The Maharaja's administration remained neutral as if to prove the veracity of his *Tajposhi* declaration : "My religion is justice." Fighting was only with lathis and stones. The police had instructions only to pick up the injured and leave them in the hospital. The army men were just spectators. On the third day the Hindu leaders and Sheikh Saheb were in contact. A public meeting was held on the fourth day at the Idgah in Srinagar, which was addressed by leaders of both the commu-nities, and that was the end of the rioting.

The Maharaja accepted all the recommendations of the Glancy Commission. Due weightage was given to the Muslim educated young men in services, and extended opportunities

for education. By conceding 'proprietary rights' of the landholders in Kashmir, wide avenues for investment in land were created which could absorb much of the accumulated surplus capital lying unused. The Maharaja also accepted the recommendation for setting up a Legislative Assembly ('Praja Sabha') on a restricted franchise, elected on communal basis, the elected members being in a minority. The right of association was accepted, and permission to start newspapers was given under certain prescribed procedures and stipulated conditions.

The Legislative Assembly set up as a result of the recommendation met on October, 17, 1934. 33 out of its seventy-five members had been elected. The rest were officials, or nominated members. This Assembly was empowered only to debate on various issues pertaining to the administration of the state, and place on record its opinions as well as its recommendations.

In 1935 Maharaja Hari Singh surrendered the Gilgit Agency to the British. The transfer took place as a sequel to the visit of Sir Aubrey Metcalfe, the British Foreign Secretary, who flew to Gilgit in 1934. Article 1 of the Agreement gave the Viceroy and Governor General of India the right "to assume the civil and military administration of so much of the wazarat of Gilgit Province of the state of J. & K. as lies beyond the right bank of the river Indus." The British got the lease of the whole territory on and beyond the right bank of the river Indus for sixty years. It was the very same Maharaja who during the period 1925-28 had, as acknowledged in a statement of the Farooq Abdullah ministry in 1982 :

> "(the Maharaja) was very particular to assert the sovereignty on Gilgit and did not hesitate to join issue with the British when they made attempts, overt and covert, to undermine the authority of the state administration...He insisted that only the state flag should fly over the frontier territory. The British had no alternative but to reiterate the sovereign right of the Maharaja...Though the intermediary efforts of their lent officer, Col. Colvin, whom the Maharaja had appointed as Prime Minister in 1932, persuaded Hari Singh

to lease out the territory to the (British) Govt. of India for a period of sixty years. The Maharaja could not refuse, for obvious reasons because he was increasingly leaning on the British support to suppress the rising tide of the people's movement in Jammu and Kashmir which had come to fore in 1931."

12. Start of A New Phase

The year 1935 was probably an important landmark in the post-Eirst World War developments, and consequently for the course of events in our country as well. The Soviet Union had succeeded in building up its basic heavy industry against unprecedented odds, and had also completed the collectivisation of its agriculture. These historic achievements were sought to be consolidated by a new constitution, which was under discussion in the length and breadth of the vast country. This was in sharp contrast to the situation in western countries where full recovery after the depression could not be achieved in spite of all the hardships inflicted on their own people, and the whole of the colonial world. The response from imperialism was an open attack on democracy by rightist reacitonary forces everywhere, and a drive towards an anti-Soviet war. After consolidation of Fascism in Italy, the Nazi take over of the German state was facilitated. Every encouragement, open or underhand, was given to them to rearm for a drive towards the East. Japanese Fascists were encouraged to take over Manchuria and then prepare the way for the subjugation of the Chinese Republic. Franco and his band of butchers were given every opportunity to crush republican Spain with the help of the fascist forces of Italy and Germany. Freedom was in peril everywhere.

In India, at an early stage, the working class movement was sought to be liquidated by catching hold of all its militant leadership, and then staging a long and expensive trial at

Meerut against all those government could lay hands upon. The intention was not only to demoralise and confuse the workers but also to instil fear and hostility of the working class movement in the minds of the propertied classes in India, and thereby weakening the freedom movement.

After several years it was felt that the trial did not serve the intended purpose. On the contrary it provided a platform for wider dissemination of new revolutionary ideas among the people. So the government wound up the proceedings, and sentenced the leaders to long years of imprisonment. A ban was placed on the Communist Party of India. However, the Congress Socialist Party came into existence soon after, followed by All India Kisan Sabha in 1936.

The new perspectives of world forces were brought to the common people by Jawaharlal Nehru through his *Whither India*, (1935) and later through his presidential addresses at the annual Congress sessions held in Lucknow (1936), and later in Faizpur (1937).

The British announced a new constitution for India—Government of India Act of 1935, already referred to earlier. In this constitution, at the Federal Assembly level, the princely states were given a representation of 40 per cent in voting strength. Considering that the Congress and the Muslim League could be relied upon to be at cross-purposes, the British would be in a strong position because of the likelihood of the states' representatives being mere nominees of the princes and so susceptible to British influence. The princes and the British had a common vested interest in the exploitation of the masses, and strengthening each other's stranglehold against the new tide of mass awakening.

In Kashmir after the setting up of the *Praja Sabha*, the acceptance of the *Glancy Commission Report* and the severance of the Gilgit Agency, political activity came to a low ebb. This does not mean, however, that the lives of the common people improved. On the contrary even the loyalist liberal paper *Ranbir* published the following account given by one Lala Girdharilal Anand in its issue of April 1, 1935 :

"The economic evil is spreading all over the state. It is clouding the people with untold miseries. The trade and

industry are extinct. Business is sacrificed at the altar of the market slump. The condition of the peasantry is appalling......But the ruler is anxious to fill his coffers for meeting his own expenses. The state goes on increasing the burden of taxes on the people......the greatest need of the time is to lay a strong foundation of a society that will represent all the Hindus, Muslims and Sikh subjects of the state alike, and in which all will be rid of the evil which attends the government's policy of divide and rule."

In a similar vein Sheikh Mohammed Abdulla wrote two years later :

"The workers, both Hindus and Muslims equally become the prey of the capitalists. The labouring classes in Kashmir made more sacrifices during the last six years of our freedom movement, but they did not gain anything out of it. It is a matter of shame for the educated Muslims who secured government jobs as a result of the freedom movement that they do not have any regard for the poor Muslims. The peasants and the workers fiill the state treasury with their blood and the money is spent by others ......Unemployed Hindus are similarly crushed under the clutches of the capitalists of their own community.

"This state of affairs will, however, die one day. Now the time is fast approaching when a united front of all workers and peasants will be organised. We must, therefore, render every possible help to the Mazdoor Sabha and its leaders."

A decisive step in strengthening the above trend was taken in the state when in 1935 the weekly *Hamdard* was started under the joint ownerhip of Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla and Prem Nath Bazaz. Its editor was Moulana Sayed Masoodi, General Secretary of All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference, and one of its top leaders. The inauguration ceremony was performed by the Congress leader Saif-ud-Din Kichlu, the hero of Jallianwalla Bagh massacre in 1919. It was to protest against his arrest along with that of Dr. Satyapal, that the public meeting had been called for, and which was then subjected to an intense shower of bullets by Gen. Dyer. The auspices in

which the publication was inaugurated is indicative of the new spirit then prevailing in the state.

In November 1936, students of S.P. College, Srinagar, held the first students' conference in the state in which members of both communities participated. The second session of this conference took place in September 1937. The president-designate for this conference was Dr. Kanwar Mohammad Ashraf, a leading Marxist intellectual, who also happened to be a secretary of the All India National Congress, in charge of Muslim mass contact. At that time Jawaharlal Nehru was the Congress President. This was the first time that an intensive and close interchange of information had taken place between the progressive freedom movement in the Indian sub-continent and the mass movement in Kashmir. After this events started moving rather fast.

A few months later Sheikh Abdulla took the initiative to contact Jawaharlal Nehru in Lahore. This meeting took place at the railway station when Jawaharlal was about to board a train for the North Western Frontier Province. Sheikh Saheb accepted Nehru's invitation to accompany him on his tour to give the two of them an opportunity of detailed discussion about matters of mutual interest. This enabled Sheikh Saheb to see at close quarters the glorious Red Shirts' Movement of the *Pushtoo* speaking people for freedom and social advancement. This left a very deep impression on him, particularly of the personality of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Much to his surprise he found Badshah Khan not only extraordinarily brave but also deeply religious and self-sacrificing. Soon after this tour, on March 26, 1938, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference met for its annual session at Jammu. From this platform an insistent call was given to non-Muslims in the state to join the movement for a responsible self-government on the basis of universal adult suffrage and joint-electorate.

In Jammu province some ground had already been covered in the same direction by the lonely furrow that Sardar Budh Singh of Mirpur district had been ploughing for nearly two decades. From the early twenties he had been fighting a one-man crusade, and drawing attention to the severe agrarian

crisis developing in *Kandi* areas of the Jammu province. His appeal was strongly directed against the exploitation of the peasantry in the area by the *money-lender-sahukar-landlord combine*, and he ignored the religious affiliations of the parties concerned. Because of this he had personally suffered grievously under the Maharaja's rule, including imprisonment in Bahoo Fort, and premature retirement from the prestigious post of *Wazir-i-Wazarat* (D.C.) on a very meagre pension. Sardar Budh Singh had been elected to *Praja Sabha* on a Sikh ticket from Mirpur district (now Pakistan occupied). As a member of this House he never missed an opportunity of giving an unqualified support to the Muslim Conference members whenever their demands had an edge in favour of the tiller of land. In fact the Muslim Conference members felt greatly embarrassed when Sardar Saheb resigned from his seat in the Assembly on the issue of tax concessions which he advocated in favour of *Bakrawals* (stock-breeders living in or near jungles), all of them wholly Muslims.

Another cross-current in the state affairs was the appearance of a minority of intellectuals responsive to the progressive trends in the world. Success of socialism in the Soviet Union could not be altogether hidden from the world by the colossal campaign of disinformation, and rigour of the iron curtain maintained by imperialism to hide it, particularly from the inhabitants of the colonial countries. Fascist barbarity was flaunted openly just to instil fear among its potential victims. The resistance of the Spanish republic as well as the Chinese people to fascist onslaughts highlighted the two camps that were gradually being formed in the world, one working for liberation of the common man, and the other for his eternal servitude. A serious breach in the disinformation screen against the Indian people was the launching of a legal weekly paper, the *National Front* by the Commuist Party of India in 1938. A somewhat similar objective was later also achieved by the launching of the daily *National Herald* from Lucknow under the patronage of Jawaharlal Nehru In Kashmir, a small step taken in this direction was the formation of a "Free Thinkers' Club". Miss Mahmuda Ahmed Ali Shah, (now Mahmuda Begum of

Indian National Congress Secretariat) and the late Khwaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, then member of *Praja Sabha*, were notable luminaries among its members. Mr. Sadiq was among the top leaders of the Muslim Conference, as well as the National Conference, besides being Chief Minister of the J. & K. state from 1964 to 1971. His key position in the national movement enabled him to exert his own influence in a significant way to its whole course in an anti-imperialist direction.

This was the general background when the Working Committee of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference met in Srinagar on the 28th of June, 1938. After an exhaustive discussion, which took 52 hours, it passed a resolution recommending to the General Council "to bring about a change in the constitution during the next annual session," and suitably amend it so that all those "who desired to participate in the struggle for responsible government could join as members irrespective of their caste, creed, or religion". It was also decided to observe August 5, 1938 as Responsible Government Day, for popularising the democratic demands of the people. These demands formed the content of a *Manifasto* issued on August 29, 1938 under the signature of 12 top Hindu, Muslim and Sikh leaders of the state.

These developments in a frontier Muslim majority state, contiguous with N.W.F.P. dominated by the powerful Red Shirt movement, with devastating implications for the British strategy of fanning communal division, with possible impact on Punjab, was potentially a shattering blow for British imperialism. The British had only one potent strategic weapon to fight the Indian freedom movement. They depended on producing a cleavage between Hindus and Muslims, embittering their reciprocal relations and generating irrational fear and hatred for each other. The fact of the formation of popular Congress ministries in seven major provinces in the country was already being used to accelerate schism between the Hindu and Muslim communities and to create fertile ground for separatist tendencies to grow. The Muslim League under Mr. Jinnah proved to be a welcome ally to this British strategy of subjugation and partition of the sub-continent into antagonistic units. Every

effort was made to create fear and distrust among the Muslim masses at the prospect of the transfer of real power to the elected representatives of the people in a subcontinent in which Hindus happened to be the majority community. The whole state machine, the Anglo-Indian press, the covenanted central services, as well as the Special Services, played their role in all the manoeuvres in which fomenting of bloody communal riots, stabbing at street corners, looting and arson were effective means to foment and strengthen the demand for the break up of the country on the basis of religious affiliation. While the grand strategy of British Imperialism was operating along these lines developments in Kashmir could hardly give any comfort to the British imperialists, either.

No sooner was the manifesto, *National Demand*, of 12 prominent Hindu, Muslim and Sikh leaders of the J. & K. state issued than the Maharaja's government, headed by Gopalaswamy Iyengar, swooped down and arrested all the leaders and leading workers of the movement. Only Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, among the frontline leaders, managed to give the police a slip, and escaped to the Congress-ruled part of India. Apart from numerous leading cadres of the Muslim Conference about 60 non-Muslims, mostly from the Valley, were arrested, and kept under detention or sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Those convicted were made to do their full term. Raja Mohammad Akbar Khan, outstanding as the leader of the impoverished peasantry of Mirpur district, was awarded the heaviest sentence of 3 years' imprisonment.

While all this was going on, a ferment was discernible in all princely states. Behind this effervescence was the impending setting up of a Federal Government at the Centre under the Govt. of India Act of 1935, in which the princely states were to have 40% of the voting strength. In some of them it gathered great strength and ferocity. This was true at least of Travancore. In most others it was weaker, especially in those where the local leaders were susceptible to the influence of the right wing leaders of the Indian National Congress. Even Gandhiji got involved in certain small princely states in Saurashtra. His "trusteeship" theory

about the role of princes was put to a severe test by a petty bureaucrat called Veerawala. In this whole setting the people's movement in Kashmir led by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah shone the brightest. Nehru had drawn the attention of the whole country to the plight of over eight crores living in 600 odd states. An All India States' Peoples' Conference had been set up at Jawaharlal's initiative in 1938 to provide leadership to the States' Peoples' movement. Its first session met at Ludhiana (Punjab) in February 1939. Jawaharlal was its president designate. He took the initiative to sponsor Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah as its Vice-President, though the latter was still carrying out his jail term in the Jammu and Kashmir state. The linkage between the freedom movement in Kashmir and the anti-autocracy movement in other princely states was now established. The whole movement was now a powerful ally of the freedom movement of the subcontinent. It was, indeed, a blow to some of the disruptive manoeuvres of British imperialism to defeat the liberation movement of the Indian people.

A special session of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference met in Srinagar on the 1(th and 11th of June 1939. Khwaja Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq presided. 176 elected delegates attended the session. All of them, with the exception of four, voted for a resolution moved at this session to throw open the membership of the organisation to the non-Muslim population of the state. Even Choudhri Ghulam Abbas, Jammu leader, not only voted for this resolution but also delivered an impressive oration to support of it. It took him two more years to change his mind without offering any reasons for the change. However, the Muslim conference ceased to exist, and gave place to a new organisation called All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.

13. All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference

The newly constituted All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference met for its first session at Sarnal, Anantnag (Islamabad) on Oct. 2, 1939. World War II had started barely a month earlier. Choudhry Gulam Abbas was also among the delegates who attended the session. Sheikh Mohammad Abdulla was the president-designate. In his presiden tial address Sheikh Saheb claimed that the new organisation tried to unify all the poor and the exploited, the unemployed and all other suffering people of the whole state with a view to reaching the goal of an administration which is fully answerable to the people. He, however, pointed out that one may not expect to be able to unify all the members of any community for such an endeavour, for the simple reason that there are people with vested interests found to belong to all communities. It is futile to expect them also to co-operate with those carrying on the present struggle. Our state was only one among 584 princely states, in which a total of about eight crore people lived. Our struggle was only a part of the struggle of all these people for a better life. No force could prevent these eight crore people to achieve the same degree of freedom as had already been achieved by the people of the British administered part of the country. The states' peoples' movement was led by A.I. States' Peoples' Conference, headed by Pandit Nehru. The objective of this organization was that in the future Federal Assembly envisaged by the Govt. of India Act of 1935 it is the representatives of the people who should represent the princely states and not the nominees of the princes.

A democratic constitution for the organization was adopted at this session. The flag of the organization adopted was a red flag with a white plough in its centre. Earlier the flag of the old organization had been a green flag with a white crescent on it.

Much attention was given in the discussion to the economic rehabilitation of the state. A need for floating limited liability joint-stock companies, export promotion of fruit, dry and fresh, and handicrafts on a larger scale, was underlined. It was realized that assistance was needed for the revival of all local handicrafts. As for the agricultural sector, emphasis was laid on providing the peasantry with better seed, fertilizer, and assistance in raising livestock and starting large-scale poultry farming. Local party committees were instructed to assist the people in avoiding litigation, and in settling minor disputes through mediation.

Mirza Afzal Beg, leader of the Muslim Conference group in the Praja Sabha from its inception, was the president of the reception committee of the Conference. In his address he gave a stirring call for unifying all communities under one flag. He made a special reference to the aggressive imperialist war which Hitler had unleashed on the first of September. This made it all the more imperative that the people should unite. Beg Saheb in the same address gave a detailed picture of the district of Anantnag, of poverty, lack of educational and health services, of road and communication facilitles. Evidently only a responsible elected government alone could be relied upon to take serious steps to attend to these problems. This was the goal set by the National Conference for itself. A call was given for building and strengthening the new organization. The crowds of people from the town and the villages nearby, who attended the conference made it abundantly clear that they regarded the function as their own.

The National Conference organization was set up just about the time World War II started. The Viceroy, on his own, at once declared India to be at war with Germany. The constitution was suspended. The popular ministries in the provinces ceased to exist. The leaders of the Indian National Congress asked the British to make definite commitments about the

postwar regime in India before seeking the cooperation of the organization. They wanted a definite British commitment to free India as the price of their cooperation in the war effort. The British had no intention of doing so. However, it was clear that the Congress leaders did not regard this an opportunity to prepare the people for a major assault on British rule when it was at its weakest. Gandhiji rejected any suggestion of a mass satyagraha by the people, and instead started an "individual satyagraha". He frowned on every kind of mass action as likely to lead to violence and "red ruin". He insisted on certifying a satyagrahi as being absolutely truthful and non-violent before being allowed to offer the symbolic protest of "individual satyagraha" against the British. Meanwhile the British used the opportunity to gear the whole economy of the country for a major war effort with Indian resources and manpower. At the same time they continued the process of picking up all grass-root militants and key political workers and keeping them in safe custody. The best of them were kept in a concentration camp at Deoli, away from possibility of communication with the outside world, in the Rajasthan desert.

Parallel with these activities was the intensification of political disruption all over the country. The All India Students Federation was torn into two parallel organizations. Subhash Bose and his followers had to leave the Indian National Congress because of his disagreement with the strategy of 'individual satyagraha. The Congress Socialist Party also purged itself of consistent anti-imperialist elements. The Muslim League formulated its demand for Pakistan, and passed a resolution to this effect in a special session at Lahore in 1940.

All this was bound to have consequences in Kashmir also. Most of the Muslim Conference leaders from the Jammu province, who had participated in the first conference at Anantnag had second thoughts about their action, and slipped out. They had all along been under the pressure of the Muslims in government service, who did not expect the National Conference to support their sectional demands in the way that the Muslim Conference organization did in the past. A section

of businessmen had expectations of receiving war orders as had happened at the time of the first world war. They were anything but enthusiastic to be associated with an organization so obviously an ally of the Indian National Congress, and close to the ideology of Mahatmaji and Jawaharlal.

The second annual session of the National Conference was held at Baramulla on Sept. 28, 1940. Sardar Budh Singh was the president designate. No Muslim delegates from the Jammu province attended the session except those from the Mirpore District. Among these were Sardar Budh Singh, and Raja Mahammad Akbar Khan ('Raja' certainly did not reflect his property status). Master Abdul Aziz was another militant from the same district. The main political resolution passed at this session affirmed that "no scheme of responsible self-government would be acceptable to the nation in which the tillers of the soil are not allowed to enjoy the fullest fruits of their labour; for this there can be no other way than this viz., those alone should possess and own the land who till it."

Concessions were demanded for the tenants to alleviate the prevailing distress, and the attention of the conference was focussed on the existing rural indebtedness. A clear demand was made that in case a debtor pays back the principal in the form of interest, the debt should be cancelled out. At the same time debtors were promised cancellation of all debts whenever an elected responsible government came to power in the state.

Although this Conference session did adopt a programme of democratic advance, new complicating issues also made their appearance. One such issue, which produced a discordant note was the issue of the appropriate script to be taught in schools. The National Conference had been committed to the use of simple Hindustani in Persion (Nastaliq) as well as Devnagri script. All sorts of petty issues were raised and situations provoked by some of the delegates to embarras the leaders of the National Conference; this was calculated to erode their influence among the Muslim population. Soon after, Choudhry Hamid Ullah and several other Muslim MLAs from the Jammu province, without furnishing any reasons,

severed their relations with the National Conference, and again set up the Muslim Conference. They did enjoy the support of the Muslim bureaucracy. The programme of the National Conference had very little attraction for them. With each day the National Conference found itself on the defensive. Sheikh Saheb thought it expedient to give more of his time to the organization of the Muslim Awkaf. Later he dislodged, almost physically, Moulvi Yusuf Shah from the Asaari-Sharief Shrine at Hazart Bal. Force was used to bring this about. Then Sheikh Saheb concentrated his efforts to renovate and develop the shrine area.

The war economy created serious problems for the people. The British imperialists knew how to squeeze out Indian resources and funnel these to its own war effort without any scruples. Only the Communist Party of India organized mass resistance to the war effort. Therefore shortages of foodstuffs, firewood, kerosene, sugar etc became quite common throughout the country.

In J. & K., Gopalaswamy Iyengar very astutely involved the National Conference cadres in the distribution of some of the scarce commodities, particularly rice, kerosene and firewood. As might be expected some succumbed to temptations. People confronted with growing dearness and scarcity were also reluctant to be drawn into confrontation with the government. There was a general atmosphere of uncertainty.

There was consternation when the Nazis overran West Europe during 1940, and then launched war on the Soviet Union. Soon after, Japan entered the war as an Axis partner, and within months occupied the empires of France and Holland, and the British colonies of Malaya, Singapore and Burma. This produced a tremendous sense of uncertainty. One must admit that early in 1942 there was a singificant fraction of the elite who expected an Axis victory. In fact the princes and conservative sections of the Indian society were busy drawing up plans behind closed doors regarding the course to take in the eventuality of fascist occupation of the country.

In the spring of 1942 after the breakdown of the Cripps mission, the Indian National Congress suddenly hardened its positions, and on August 8, launched the 'Quit India' agitation. The National Conference was hardly in a shape to play its role as an ally of the Indian National Congress in the situation of August 1942. While continuing to give verbal support to the aspirations of the Congress it was probably expediency which prevented its being drawn into a mass struggle for which it could have mustered only limited support in Kashmir. In fact the convolutions of Congress policy since Sept. 1939 had so confused the man in the street that his whole attention was concentrated on getting some relief from the ravages of scar- city and dearness. This probably helped the leaders to be more receptive to the political line of the Communist Party of India, generally known as the 'Peoples' War' line. The C.P.I. had put forth its understanding that with the entry of the Soviet Union into the war against the fascist powers, the key task for all people everywhere was to concentrate on the complete defeat of the fascist powers, this being the decisive prerequisite for the liberation of the colonies in the post-war world. If the fascist powers won the war there was no ques- tion of any nation anywhere being free. But the defeat of the fascist powers by the Sovtet Union would open out a perspec- tive of freedom for all subject nations everywhere. This under- standing therefore militated against launching of the 'Quit India' movement when the Soviet Union was putting up a gigantic effort to resist the fascist onslaught. This line of thinking of the C.P.I. was first expounded at the Patna Conference of the All India. Students' Federation held in December, 1941, under the presidentship of Mr. Hussein Zaheer. Mr. G.M. Sadiq was present there as a guest, and fully agreed with the analysis of the situation as it waspresented at the conference. After a few months, the National Conference organized a big anti-fascist demonstration on April 20, 1942. The Working Committee met in May, and issued a statement supporting war against Fascism. On August 23, however, a "BAND" was observed to protest against the arrest of Congress leaders. In Dec. 1942 the National Conference met in Mirpur for its annual session. The political resolution passed at the session

gave an analysis of the world situation which was identical with that expounded by the C.P.I. A resolution greeting the Red Army for its smashing victories over Nazi Germany, was also passed.

There were distinct signs that the dominant leadership in the Congress did not like the new orientation of the National Conference. They did not openly criticize the organization. But an oblique attack was launched through college students who also enjoyed the patronage of several top leaders of the National Conference. Under the sign-board of "India-First Club" a malicious anti-communist tirade was launched against the C.P.I. To counter this an "Anti-Fascist Students' Front" was formed. It was patronized by G.M. Sadiq. Com. Fazal Illahie Qurban, a prominent communist from Punjab, came in May 1942 and delivered lectures to the leading workers of the 'Anti-Fascist Students Front'. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad also associated himself with these activities. Moulana Syed Masoodi and Mohiuddin Kara patronized the 'India First League'. Sheikh Saheb himself took the posture of a neutral umpire, and did not allow himself to be identified with either group too closely. It was very skilful footwork that was needed to do it, after having identified himself with the CPI analysis on the characterization of the war.

A parallel development of great significance may be traced to the special session of the A.I. Muslim League in Lahore, which envisaged the partition of India into more than one state. Kashmir was obviously a candidate for the Muslim majority grouping envisaged in the North-West. The defeat of the Anglo-French-Dutch forces in the Far East by the Japanese in 1941-43 made the possible break up of India a more immediate possibility. All sorts of plans were being drawn up behind closed doors, especially by the princes, to ensure they would be on top in case of a break up of the Indian state. This was the context in which Hari Singh sought channels of communication with leaders of the National Conference as early as 1940. In the early stages Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru made the initial probings. After a year or so Mr. R.C. Kak jumped into the fray. He had the advantage of being Kashmir based, with deeper knowledge of local conditions and personalities.

During the twenties he had been very close to Mr. Wakefield, and probably commanded the confidence of the Residency as well. In a year or so, Hari Singh appears to have made up his mind that Kak was his man, and would be an effective channel for dialogue with the National Conference leaders. In 1944 Kak was made the Prime Minister of J. & K. state.

It was in the course of this indirect dialogue which started in 1940 that Hari Singh encouraged the National Conference leaders to put down in black and white their vision of a future Kashmir. Some time in early 1943, Sheikh Saheb entrusted G.M. Sadiq with the assignment to produce such a document in consultation with trusted friends. Sadiq Sahib was known to have friends among the communists. Dr. G. Adhikari, a polit-bureau member of the C.P.I. used to be in charge of Punjab, with his office in Lady Fazal Hussain Building on the Mcleod Road in Lahore. It was in consultation with him that a draft was produced of which Sheikh Saheb approved. Meanwhile Hari Singh had gone abroad visiting his troops on various war fronts. The dialogue with the National Conference leaders was being continued through various intermediaries, particularly Mr. R C. Kak. It was during these exchanges that it was proposed that the National Conference organize an official welcome to the Maharaja on his return on March 23, 1943. The city was decorated with flags and buntings by National Conference workers. The route of the motorcade was adjusted along the gate of Mujahid Manzil, which was not situated on the main road those days. The top leaders of the National Conference, led by Sheikh Saheb himself, stood outside the gate of the Mujahid Manzil. When the open car of Hari Singh reached the spot it slowed down and Sheikh Saheb ceremoniously presented the document entitled *New Kashmir* to the Maharaja. It is interesting to remember that the Maharaja had never ventured to go through the city, even through the river, after 1931, not to say of the narrow lanes of Srinagar, and that too in an open car.

The memorandum that was presented to the Maharaja was soon published under the title "New Kashmir" with an

introduction by Sheikh Saheb himself. In the introduction Sheikh Saheb averred :

> "The inspiring picture of the regeneration of the different nationalities and peoples of the U.S.S.R., and their welding together into the united mighty Soviet state that is throwing back its barbarous invaders with deathless heroism is an unanswerable argument for the building of democracy on the cornerstone of economic equality."

The programme outlined in the document presupposes liquidation of all types of parasitism in agriculture, thorough implementation of the policy of land to the tiller, and cancellation of all debt burdens of the peasantry. The detailed enunciation of the "peasants' charter", "workers, charter", "women's charter", a democratic re-structuring of the whole state apparatus, and bringing about a cultural revolution, taken together comprise a blue-print of a society which is unknown outside the socialist countries led by communist parties. One thing that is difficult to understand is that the programme was not produced in a high tide of mass upsurge. On the contrary political activity in 1943-44 had fallen to its lowest ebb when the document was published. Later it was formally adopted as the goal of the movement in the annual session of the National Conference held in September, 1944 at the Mujahid Manzil in Srinagar. The lack of resistance to its adoption at that time can be attributed to the apathy and scepticism of the cadres rather than the high tide of militancy in the state. There was an air of unreality about the whole operation.

While the delegates were going through the procedure of discussion and adoption an exhibition of war pictures and Nazi atrocities was being organized in the compound outside the hall by the recently formed organization "Friends of the Soviet Union" in Srinagar. Some of the leaders objected to it, and showed great resentment. The exhibition was open barely for a day, and had to be removed after that. This happened in spite of the fact that all the office bearers of the F.S.U. organization were also the office bearers of the National Conference, including Working Committee members.

Maharaja Hari Singh, to all appearances, was not unduly upset by the revolutionary implications of the New Kashmir programme. Within a few weeks of its formal adoption by the National Conference organization he nominated Mr. Afzal Beg as his Minister for Public Works. Along with him Mr. Ganga Ram of Jammu was nominated as the Minister for Education. What did the leading political parties of the state think of this royal gesture? It is instructive to go through the political speeches of the leaders of the National and Muslim Conference organizations in the *Praja Sabha* to get a glimpse of their thinking, and the general atmosphere of the state.

Mirza Afzal Beg in his capacity as the leader of the National Conference Assembly party, spoke in the Praja Sabha on Oct. 2, 1944:

"His Highness' Command has come at a time when nobody would deny that any constitutional progress would not have been insisted upon and anybody invested with power to confer constitutional reforms would easily have deferred them if he wished. That is the state of affairs prevailing in British India and in the world at large. Therefore, if one would have liked to take advantage of that state of affairs, in order not to confer such constitutional reforms, no better opportunity could have risen than the present one. When we see that in spite of being able to put off any progress till some time in future. His Highness has come forward and conferred reforms on the people of this country, we feel sure of the intention which underlies the Command and of the unerring instinct for constitutional government that His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur possesses. I, therefore, do not read the Command in terms of the Command itself, but I judge the Command by the spirit that underlies it and I do beg to express my congratulations to our Ruler on that instinct and that sentiment which has prompted His Highness to issue this royal Command (pertaining to the inclusion of two non-official ministers in the cabinet) at this juncture. I feel that the present one is a real concrete step forward, to the people of this

country. Opinions may differ as to how far we can influence the policy of the government now through these reforms, but opinions must be, and surely are unanimous that this is really a step forward, and judging from the spirit underlying this step, we can hope that this will be only a first step in the progressive career of the country led by H.H. the Maharaja Bahadur."

Choudhery Hamid Ullah Khan, on behalf of the Muslim Conference group, made the following comments :

"I, on behalf of myself, and on behalf of the Muslim Conference party in the House, rise to express our deep sentiments of gratitude to our beloved Ruler, one of the most enlightened princes as he has proved himself to be, beyond any shadow of doubt, when he himself expressed that freedom was his watchword, freedom from crippling restrictions, and freedom from strangling control, to-day we have beyond any doubt another opportunity to realize that our beloved Ruler, who has always been conscious of the feelings of the people of the state that they want to be associated in the administration of His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur, and that they want to be very near the person of their beloved Ruler, has given them opportunity to be so. Our beloved Ruler, by taking this definite progressive step, of which any Indian state may well feel proud, has given the representatives of this House an opportunity of participating in his administration, and thereby he has graciously bestowed a great honour to all the members of the House. I have to say that the constitutional policy of the All J. & K. Muslim Conference has always been demand for the establishment of full responsible government in the state. We have demanded nothing short of that as we consider it to be the birth-right of the people of the state. I have the greatest pleasure in realizing that H.H. the Maharaja Bahadur has *complied to a great extent with the demand* of the All J. & K. Muslim Conference by this great constitutional step, which provides an opportunity to two members of the House to associate themselves with his administration."

Both speeches, reproduced in full, throw a flood light on the level of popular movement in 1944, as reflected in the consciousness of its recognized parliamentary leaders at that time.

Once the *New Kashmir* programme was published the calculations of those who sponsored it ceased to be of critical importance. As the details of the programme began to reach the common people it started to influence the political process in a powerful way. This process of political enlightenment had already started when the liberationist character of the anti-fascist war was officially recognized by theNational Conference. Now, the 'New Kashmir' programme provided the context to what was implied concretely by liberation of the people. This was a point of view to which the official Congress was not reconciled, and the pro-imperialism Muslim League was positively hostile.

Soviet victories in the war against the Nazis thus opened new vistas in Kashmir politics. The division of students into "anti-fascists" and "nationalists" stimulated discussions on key problems in international affairs, and disseminated knowledge about socialism and the Soviet Union, about the limitations of Congress-sponsored nationalism, about the legitimate goals of a freedom movement. In this debate some workers from outside the state also made significant contributions. One of these was Abdul Lateef, a young Afghan whose family had suffered at the hands of the British when they contrived the overthrow of Amanullah Khan. Fazal Illahie Qurban of Lahore was another. He had left India as a Muhajir during the Khilafat movement, and returned a communist after receiving education in Moscow. There was also Dr. Ganesh Prasad from Benares, and Gopal Dass from U.P. A whole generation of young people got involved in serious politics. The "Friends of Soviet Union" was founded under influential auspices. Mohiuddin Kara gave up his "India First League" posture, and took a lead in organizing the F.S.U, along with G.M. Sadiq. Soon afterwards "Kashmir Mazdoor Union" was organized, as the central apex body of half a dozen trade unions with a mass base in silk and woollen textile industry.

This organization won important concessions for the Muncipal Workers, Woollen Textile workers, and led a successful strike of Silk Weaving Factory, Rajbagh, in 1945. What made these activities particularly significant was that the District National Conference, under Mohiudeen Kara, accepted collective affiliation of the trade unions in the National Conference Organization. This strengthened both the National Conference, as well as the workers' movement. The *New Kashmir* programme provided the ideological perspective for these activities. The Communist Party of India had been legalized in 1942. So communist literature came to be sold in Kashmir from 1942 onwards. By the summer of 1945 the number of copies of *Peoples War*, weekly run by the C.P.I. sold every week reached 270. This was in addition to about 100 permanent subscribers. Communist literature worth Rs. 350 was sold in Kashmir in the years 1944 & 1945. The National Conference got strengthened by all these activities. At the time of the Sopore Session in August 1945, the Srinagar District —the only one with a proper organization—had about 20,000 members who had actually paid membership fee, something unprecedented in the state. "Friends of the Soviet Union" had a membership of a few hundered. A few tens were communists by conviction and were National Conference office-bearers at various levels. They came from all the three major communities in the state.

In 1945, May Day was celebrated in Hazuri Bagh—now called Iqbal Park, where a red flag with hammer and sickle was flown. Sheikh Abdullah and Moulana Sayyid were among the chief speakers.

After 1943, it was clear to most that the Nazis were not going to win the war, and that the Soviet Union would be victorious. Gradually the long-term projections of the Congress as well as the League leaders started taking shape. Already C. Rajagopalachari, with his astute insight had spelled out the basis of a "settlement" of a sort through his "formula" for partition to which imperialism could have no serious objection. The Indian National Congress recorded its opposition to the formula without giving a coherent

positive lead. The expulsion of the Communists from the Congress about this time could also be part of the preparation for a postwar settlement. The Communists in order to seize the initiative from the British were doing their best to bring Congress and League together on the basis of the recognition of the right of self-determination of nationalities : Bengalis, Punjabis, Sindhis, etc. This approach of the Communists was wholly owned by the National Conference. This point of view they presented to Mohammad Ali Jinnah when he was invited by Sheikh Saheb to visit Kashmir in 1944. Again when Jawaharlal Nehru and Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, accompanied by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan visited Srinagar in August 1945 the same approach was placed before them in the welcome address presented to them by the National Conference leaders. Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not conceal his hostility to the National Conference and Sheikh Abdullah. A certain degree of unease was also apparent between the Indian National Congress and the National Conference by this attitude of the National Conference, but they never allowed it to cause serious estrangement. The Sixth session of the National Conference held in Sopore in the first week of August 1945 was a culminating point of its activity before Independence. Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad the Congress president, and the Beluchi leader Abdul Samad Khan Achekzai were among those present in Sopore. The session was unique in the state in its representative character, the number and quality of the delegates elected by the membership for the purpose, and the quality of the debate that took place over the major issues of the state as well as the subcontinent. This elevated atmosphere, full of vitality and hope, had been generated basically by the mass mobilization that had been done for a year and a half based on the programme of New Kashmir. In the background was the crushing defeat inflicted by the heroic Soviet people on Nazi Germany, while the Anglo-French alliance had been unable to withstand the Nazi assault. A new upsurge of subject people in the colonies had started to manifest itself. Victory over the Japanese fascism was expected in the near future. People had also seen only a few years earlier how the old imperialists—English, French and Dutch, had run away in confusion

before these very Japanese. After the Japanese were defeated—the Vietnamese, Indonesians, Malayans and Burmese, all were in revolt. The naval ratings' mutiny triggered a powerful upsurge of people in the subcontinent affecting all branches of the armed forces, the working class, and millions of others in the subcontinent.

The National Conference had been reinforced by a new youthful communist cadre, working at several levels. They brought with them a new methodology and a new atmosphere which further strengthened the movement.

Sofi Mohammad Akbar presented his address on behalf of the Reception Committee. He dilated mostly on his own district, its rich resources and potentialities. He contrasted these with the endemic food shortage in the district, the lack of infra-structure for development, economic stagnation, paucity of educational and medical facilities.

Sheikh Saheb in his presidential address delivered on August 3, (1945) drew attention to the parallel developments of the preceding six years in the state, and in the world as a whole. In the state, all the exploited people had been organised on one platform so as to be able to work for their own deliverance. On the global scale a great war had been fought in which, after colossal sacrifices the power of fascism had been crushed, thereby releasing irresistible forces of liberated people to solve age-old problems of want and exploitation. He took pride in the fact that by taking a stand against fascism, and sponsoring the progamme of New Kashmir, the National Conference had given a correct lead to the people of the state. In regard to the problem of India's independence he made a fervent appeal to the leaders of the National Congress and the Muslim League to offer a united front to the British, and thereby open the way for the liberation of 400 million human beings of the whole subcontinent.

Coming to the programme of New Kashmir, Sheikh Saheb recalled that in 1940, at its Baramulla session the National Conference committed itself to give land to the tiller and to abolish rural indebtedness. In its 1941 session it was decided to demand the abolition of jagirdari and also the provision

of adequate educational and medical facilities to all the people. Later in 1944 the programme of New Kashmir was adopted as the goal of the movement. Sheikh Saheb denounced the vested interests who tried to exploit the religious sentiments of the people for their own selfish ends. He called on all the young people to start a campaign of explaining and elucidating the programme of New Kashmir and to build the National Conference organization as the instrument that was needed for its realization.

One of the resolutions passed at the session conveyed warm greetings to the Soviet (Red) army on the occasion of its victory over the fascist menace to mankind. The conference also thanked the Soviet Union for having raised at the San Francisco Conference the question of the participation of true representatives of a free India in the deliberations of the United Nations at its inaugural session.

While all this was happening, the Kashmir Premier was already in contact with the British command to secure the release and transportation of several battalions of J.& K. forces from the various war fronts back home to teach the people a lesson. But our political cadres do not often have the necessary perception to watch the ways of imperialism which slithers quietly and pounces on its victim when least expected. The movement led by the National Conference in 1945 in a sensitive area of great political and strategical implications for the subcontinent, had profound significance for shaping the future development of the whole country. The Residency was still there, watching unobtrusively with a century's experience of local affairs and deep contacts among individual families.

So when Kak staged a provocation later that summer, the National Conference leadership was taken completely by surprise. Mirza Afzal Beg was so cornered that he resigned. He was quickly replaced by another leader of the National Conference from a non-Kashmiri-speaking area, one Ahmed Yar Khan. Obviously the latter must have been in contact with the government for a long time to have been appointed so promptly. Plainly this was a slap in the face of the National

Conference organisation. The provocation was obviously deliberate. If the organisation swallowed the insult it would demoralise the party cadre, and leaders would lose face. If they reacted sharply the government was ready to suppress the people ruthlessly. The National Conference leaders deliberated on these pros and cons, and made no quick move except verbal protests.

14. Postwar Upsurge and 'Quit Kashmir' Movement

In 1942, after the Japanese occupied Singapore and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose set up an 'Indian National Army' there, Nehru said that he would oppose a Jap-sponsored "Indian Army" invading India together with the Japanese. However, in 1945 when news spread that thousands of these captured I.N.A. men were being maltreated in several concentration camps there was indignation everywhere, and huge mass demonstrations for their release. Government was forced to set them free within a few months. There was also disaffection in the R.I.N., where a large number of Indian citizens had been recruited during the war. The naval ratings demanded equality of treatment with the British in regard to food and other living conditions. Congress, League and Red flags were flown on naval ships in Bombay and Karachi harbours, and the ratings defied the British Naval High Command. Admiral Godfrey threatened to blow up the ships. There were solidarity strikers everywhere despite the opposition of Sardar Patel and Mr. Jinnah. Protest strikes and hartals took place in Bombay, Calcutta, Trichinopoly, Madras and Madura. In Bombay on Feb. 22, the British army was let loose. More than 200 people were shot down in a random manner on the streets and in their homes. At the time of their surrender on February 23, 1946, the strike committee issued this statement :

"Our strike has been a historic event in the life of our nation. For the first time the blood of men in the Services and men in the streets flowed together in a common cause.

> We in the Services will never forget this. We know also that you, our brothers and sisters, will not forget. Long live our great people. Jai Hind."

In the wake of the R.I.N. mutiny came R.I.A.F. strikes in several places. 300 sepoys posted at Jabbalpur struck work and paraded through the streets with Congress, League and Red flags. On March 8, there was a protest strike in Delhi. The Town Hall was set on fire. On March 18, Gurkha soldiers revolted at Dehra Dun. On March 19, policemen at Allahabad started a hunger-strike. The British Government was quick to react to the new situation. Even as early as on January 2, Pethick-Lawrence had announced that the British Government had proposed "to make India an equal partner in the Commonwealth and there was no longer any need for organised pressure from Indians..." Almost immediately, after the naval ratings pulled down the Union Jack the British Government declared that a Cabinet Mission would visit India to settle the question of Indian Independence. This announcement was made on 22 February, 1946. P.J. Griffith, leader of the European group in the Central Legislature at Delhi, later remarked : "India, in the opinion of many was on the verge of a revolution before the British Cabinet Mission arrived. The Cabinet Mission has at least postponed if not eliminated the danger."

Soon after their arrival in Delhi the Cabinet Mission presented a Memorandum, apart from the constitutional proposals for British India, on "States' Treaties and Paramountcy" to the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. Para 5 of the Memorandum stated :

> "That the rights of the states which flow from the relationship of the crown, will no longer exist, and all the rights surrendered by the states will return to the states. Political arrangements between the states on the one hand and the British crown and British India on the other, will thus be brought to an end. The void will have to be filled either by the states entering into a feudal relationship with the successor government or governments in British India, or failing this, entering into particular arrangements with it or them."

This was the background in which the National Conference leadership submitted its own memorandum to the Cabinet Mission at Delhi in early March, 1946.

In this memorandum the National Conference drew attention to the fact that the Dogra dynasty had acquired sovereignty over Kashmir as a consequence of the Treaty of Amritsar, by which the Sikh Empire parted with this territory because of their inability to pay war indemnity seventyfive lakh (*nanak-shahi*) rupees imposed by the British. Gulab Singh paid the money and got his title over Kashmir. In effect the treaty was a sale deed. The Memorandum commented :

"No sale deed, howsoever sacrosanct, can condemn more than four million men and women to the servitude of an autocrat when the will to live under his rule is no longer there. We the people of Kashmir are determined to mould our destiny and we appeal to the members of the Cabinet Mission to recognize the justice and strength of our case."

Thus was the stage set for the 'Quit Kashmir' agitation demanding the annulment of the Treaty of Amritsar, along with the withdrawal of British power from the Indian sub-continent. A few lectures were delivered by Sheikh Saheb in Srinagar during April and early May to elucidate his position and popularize the demand. The state government reacted sharply and arrested him on May 20, 1946. That was the start of the agitation in the state, generally referred to as the 'Quit Kashmir' movement.

What happened has been concisely described by the late R. Palme Dutt, well-known internationally as a working class leader, who had been allowed to enter the land of his ancestors in 1946 for the first time in his life to cover the Cabinet Mission activities for the London paper *Daily Worker*. Under the date line July 16, 1946 he reported :

"Kashmir is the largest Indian state in area. Its strategic importance is great, since it borders the Soviet Union and China. On its northernmost uplands the few scattered peasants can see from their land of poverty only a few miles across the mountains the smoking factory chimneys and prosperity of their brothers of Tadjikistan. Small wonder that the British are concerned to maintain their iron curtain against the dread example of Socialism. In

recent years the northern district of Gilgit has been detached and brought under direct British Military occupation and control...

"The National Conference launched in May their 'Quit Kashmir' campaign against the Maharaja, challenging the sanctity of the Treaty of Amritsar by which a century ago the Kashmir people had been sold in bondage to the Dogra dynasty by the East India Company for half-a-million pounds, and demanding that the Dogra house must go and princely rule end. The British authorities understood very well the significance of that challenge. The whole British plan for continued domination in India turns on the princes and the Indian states as the pivot. If once the Kashmir people should drive out the Maharaja, and if the example were to sweep through every state of India, the whole British plan for continued domination would be torpedoed. The British authorities understood well enough the significance of the issue, even if the Congrees leadership, horrified at such an uncompormising democratic challenge and full of elaborate clever plans to win over the princes, did not. Terror was let loose in Kashmir.

"Sheikh Abdulla had invited me to Kashmir in the beginning of May, but the Simla Conference had prevented me. His last letter to me on May 17 had said that 'conditions here are unsettled', and that it was necessary to be 'prepared for any untoward eventuality'. 'Some three hundred leaders of the Peoples' Conference were arrested, the people, men, women and children, were shot down and numbers killed; even Nehru, coming later to Kashmir, was placed under arrest. All this could not happen in an Indian state without the approval and control of the Viceroy and the Political Department...

"I had a three-hour interview with the Governor of Srinagar, who is also the District Magistrate, and responsible for law and order. Premier Kak, after many days of arrangements for a promised interview finally pleaded illness. The British Resident, after many similar delays, finally refused point-blank to see me, on the ground that he had previously seen Norman Cliff of the 'News Chroni-

cle, (who had already given me a very interesting and revealing account of the interview) and that he did not like what Cliff had written, and had accordingly decided to see no more press representatives. It was evident that he did not relish any enquiry into his proceedings...

"The driver of the car which I had used in Srinagar was, I learned subsequently, arrested and beaten up to extract from him information as to my movements. I was able to have first-hand accounts of the terrible outrages which were still going on, especially in Budgam and Islamabad. Despite the terror, there could be no question of the unbreakable spirit and determination of the people. The red flag with the plough was to be seen on all sides on the houses in Srinagar."

On September 10, 1946 Sheikh Saheb deposed before a magistrate at the Srinager Cantonment (Badami Bagh):

"I have pleaded not guilty to the charges of sedition which according to jurists, is a crime against society, and I stand by whatever I have said or written in regard to the fundamental rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir... Where law is not based on the will of the people it can lead to the suppression of their aspirations. Such law has no moral validity even though it may be enforced for a while...

"The claims I and my colleagues have made (are) not merely on behalf of the four million people of Jammu and Kashmir, but also of the 93 million people of no particular race, or religion, or colour...

"I hold that humanity as a whole is indivisible by such barriers, and human rights must always prevail. The fundamental rights of all men and women to live and act as free human beings, to make laws and fashion their political, social, and economic fabric, so that they may advance the cause of human freedom and progress, are inherent and cannot be denied, although they may be suppressed for a while...

"The All India States' Peoples' Conference, of which I have the honour to be the Vice President...has clearly laid down that the old treaties between the states and the British Government, or with (their) representatives are

obsolete and must end. That applies to all treaties, including the Treaty of Amritsar, which has some special and unhappy features, which make it a bond or sales deed of the territory, and people of Kashmir......This treatment of a people as a commodity, which can be transferred for hard cash has all along been deeply resented by the Kashmiris, whether Hindu, Sikh or Muslim. It hurts their national dignity...

"The state has vast and rich natural resources but these have failed to relieve poverty and utter want. Indeed no effort is being made to develop these resources for the common good...It can only be remedied by the representatives of the people undertaking the tasks of planning and development for the betterment of the masses...

"The percentage of literacy in the state is six, the percentage of higher education is one, and the average income is eleven rupees per annum. This by itself is an eloquent commentary on the system and structure of the government to which the slogan of Quit Kashmir is addressed."

The All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference denounced the agitation, and in a resolution declared : "The leaders of the National Conference are merely playing with Nehru because on the one hand Sheikh Abdullah has entrusted his defence to Nehru's hands, and on the other the underground workers of National Conference are working on the directives of the C.P.I."

Moulvi Yusuf Shah also supported the government, calling the Maharaja "a shadow of God on earth". There was a propaganda barrage in the loyalist press that Russian agents were active fomenting trouble in Kashmir. Regarding this allegation Nehru commented :

"It is not a question of belief. It is fantastic nonsense... It is quite absurd for any intelligent person to talk of any Russian bogey in Kashmir now or in the near future."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah also denounced the agitation, and called it "an agitation of a few malcontents out to destroy law and order", and advised...Kashmiri Muslims... "to beware of their enemies and not be misled by slogans in Kashmir and stampeded into an action which would gravely imperil their interests."

A League paper *Asri-Jadeed* from Calcutta observed :

"Prime Minister Kak has announced that he will not tolerate any outside interference in the internal affaire of Kashmir. We honestly feel that the people of every province and state must be free to settle their own problems."

When Sheikh Abdullah was arrested on May 20, 1946, he had done no more than issue a statement from Delhi, and delivered a few speeches in Srinagar between 9th and 16th of May explaining the context of his demand. No other organisational decisions, much less any discussions with cadres, had taken place. In fact, most of his colleagues and workers had been taken aback by the gravity of the issues raised, and their implications for the organisation. Sheikh Saheb had just blandly asked for 15000 "Do or Die" volunteers. Nothing concrete had been done as a follow up.

Sheikh Abdullah was placed under arrest on the afternoon of May 20, half way between Srinagar and Rawalpindi, on his way to Delhi. The government repressive machinery was fully mobilised. By the evening the army had taken positions on most bridges and road crossings in the Valley and spread out barbed wire barricades. This was under the overall command of Brigadier Scott, Chief of the Staff of the state armed forces. An operational headquarters was set up the same evening in the 'Widdows Palace' under the command of IGP Powell, another key British officer in the state. Without a moment's loss, all the key workers of the National Conference, already under surveillance, were put under arrest. Only a small number escaped. Premier Kak told the press : (We have been) "preparing for eleven months...we are ready to meet the challenge. There will be no weak-kneed policy... we shall be ruthlessly firm and we make no apology for it."

The National Conference, or what remained of the organisation after this sudden coup, set up a War Council to direct the agitation. It took a whole week before it could function at all. It did not have a penny for a start. It was the Punjab Committee of the CPI which sent a donation forthwith to tide over the crisis. While all this was happening, people were dazed, and were looking for a lead, which did not come. The government made it known through posters and verbal announce-

ments that anyone associating with the agitation would be imprisoned for seven years and fined rupees five thousand.

It was during the first week of the organisational collapse and uncertainty that communist cadres all of whom formed part of the National Conference organisation at various levels managed to make contacts with workers still free, while evading their own arrest. On the first Friday after May 20, Hazrat Bal shrine was very tense in the afternoon. As usual people were collecting for the afternoon prayers. But the whole area was crowded by armed police and military in a big show of force. A rumour was circulated that anyone trying to speak to the congregation would be immediately shot. To make the threat credible, rifles were conspicuously flaunted by the army men in threatening postures.

The afternoon prayers finished, there was an air of expectancy and everyone seemed to have, so to say, held his breath. Several young men, including some known communists, moved towards the pulpit. The armed men all around made threatening movements. One of the young men, a B.A. student in white khadi, started speaking. People listened and made everyone sit down and moved nearer to the stage. People had an eye on the armed men. Nothing happened. The lecture continued. All the young men spoke one after the other, denounced the government repression, and reiterated the demand for abrogation of the Treaty of Amritsar. The spell broke down, and people conquered all their fear. Defiant slogans were raised by the whole audience.

Four weeks afterwards there were widespread lectures and rallies, clashes with security men, lathi charges and shootings all over the Valley. Many lives were lost. Several thousands were put under arrest, sentenced and fined. Nehru commented :

"I am convinced that this kind for thing cannot take place without the support and countenance of the Political Department, and their agents. We know very well that in such matters it is the Resident who plays a dominant part."

A local weekly, apologist of the Government threatened : "If the disturbances were not quelled within a couple of days and things would have gone bad here, then in the

> name of India's defence requirements a few battalions of British troops would have moved in either from Rawalpindi or Sialkote."

A solidarity movement arose all over the subcontinent. All non-communal political parties denounced the repression in Kashmir by the Maharaja. The Communist Party of India was conspicuous not only by the vigour with which it built up solidarity campaign all over the country, and raised funds to assist the National Conference, but also by the principled stand it took unambiguously on the illegality of the Amritsar Treaty, and on the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir. No other political party in the country did this.

Not only did Sardar Patel and Acharya Kripalani, then Congress president, have reservations on this, but Jai Prakash Narain and Ashok Mehta were conspicuous for the casuistry and sophistry with which they made their whole stand very ambiguous. They denounced the excesses of the government but did not refer to the Treaty of Amritsar. Mostly the agitation followed the standard 'Satyagraha pattern' evolved by the Indian National Congress. The satyagrahi addresses a public meeting, which is frequently branded as unlawful by the law and order authorities. The speech is usually an emotional speech intended to arouse the audience, who defy the police. The speaker is put under arrest, and the audience is scattered by the police using lathis or fire-arms. Sometimes the people hit back with brickbats or stones if any are around. Firing may cause casualties. The police may snatch the dead and the wounded, or the people may be able to rescue them, and give them first aid, or take them to a hospital. This may arouse the people to such an extent that it causes a general 'hartal.'

In this agitation, during the first few weeks there were cases of building barricades on the roads going through the city, or approaches to a town, by felling trees, digging trenches, with a view to obstructing the movement of security forces. Later, when under protracted oppression the movement appeared to flag the War Council permitted workers to express their resentment by setting fire to some government offices.

and bridges, after surreptitiously pouring kerosene and petrol mixtures over them. This particular tactics was strongly opposed by the communist cadre. They took the view that activitie of this kind only invited repression over the people in the immediate neighbourhood. Besides, it also caused inconvenience to them by the loss of scanty facilities, which they may have acquired after great effort over a long period of time. It only hindered instead of encouraging mass participation of the common people, and hence was a self-defeating tactics in the long run. They also opposed condoning personal attack on the editor of a local daily carrying on propaganda for the government. For these reasons the War Council decided to order all cadres with communist orientation to take the first opportunity to court arrest in a public place.

The War Council itself was ambiguous about its political stand in its publications. It seemed to agree with those who supported the movement for the annulment of the Amritsar Treaty after the transfer of power by Britain. At the same time it also seemed to agree with those who interpreted 'Quit Kashmir' as a demand for a responsible, elected government of the state, the Maharaja being reduced to a constitutional monarch.

The Cabinet Mission proposals were revealed in the spring of 1946. The All India Congress Committee in one of its publications commented :

> "What we feared has come to pass. The Cabinet Mission, in trying to accommodate communal and feudal interests, have ignored the larger interests of the nation. The British ministers meant well and did their best, but their best has unfortunately turned out to be not much better than what even Messrs Churchill and Amery were willing to concede in March, 1942......The independence that has been promised is so hedged in with restrictions that it is a misnomer to call it by that name."

Immediately following the Cabinet Mission statement of policy Field Marshal Montgomery flew to India for special strategic consultation. Protracted negotiations followed the announcement of the Cabinet Mission Plan, and dragged on during the summer of 1946, and after. An Interim Govern-

ment under Nehru was set up on September 2, 1946. British declaration of December 6, 1946 made 'grouping' of units compulsory. The London Conference took place in January 1947.

Then came the Mountbatten Award, which the diehard Tory John Amery called "a stroke of genius". R P. Dutt commented in *Labour Monthly* :

> "For many decades the main boast of British rule in India had been its unification of India. At the end of two centuries of British rule the India which had been united under Asoka and Chandragupta over two thousand years ago, and under Akbar three and a half centuries ago, was handed back to subordinate Indian rulers—split into discordant fragments, and needing to tread a toilsome and painful path to overcome this vicious legacy of imperialist 'divide and rule'."

Withdrawal ? Perhaps, but not withdrawal of interest in neo-colonist domination : certainly not in Kashmir, because of its potential for use to influence developments in the whole subcontinent, as we see today even after forty years of freedom.

Army Intelligence Department opened its office on Kashmir border. This was reported in a Calcutta newspaper *Nationalist* on September 5, 1945.

Meanwhile, American imperialism had been steadily casting its net in the Indian subcontinent. As early as August 1946 the American Red Cross established itself in Srinagar in the houseboat "Hellez". About the same time the National Geographic Society of America sent its photographer Volkmar Wentzel to Kashmir. The institution is known to be close to the Defence Department in U.S.A.

On September 27, 1946, *Reuter* reported from London :

> "Plans are taking shape in London to send a party of scientists and surveyors to explore between 800 and 900 miles of the hitherto untapped territory along the border-lands of Kashmir and Sinkiang, along the Karakoram mountains...Project leader Capt. Frank Mendez told Reuter that the scheme has received the approval of the Indian Survey Department."

The *Bombay Chronicle* reported on June 14, 1946 :

"Kashmir is going to have a strong air force consisting of bombers...two planes have already arrived..." One may here recall the shrill cries Arthur Moore, editor of the *States-man*' (Calcutta), as early as in 1940, asking Indians to 'Wake up', to face the "meance of the Red Air Force", obviously a *raison d'etre* for British occupation of our country.

Air Marshal Sir Richard Pierse Air C-in-C for Asia for R.A.F. also visited Kashmir in 1946. Even Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Commander, South East Asia Command, found time to visit Kashmir. About the same time the daily *Pratap* reported, "The Royal Air Force are carrying out manoeuvres...to ascer-tain whether paratroops could be landed in Kashmir."

Then came the Mountbatten Award.

The road to the Mountbatten Award has been long but cunningly laid, with considerable experience of defrauding and subjugating nations. Its basis may be said to have been laid in the immediate post-Mutiny period in the nineteenth century. In fact, several decades even prior to this, with fewer inhibitions, one of the ruling set, using the pen-name CARNAUTICUS wrote in the *Asiatic Review* :

"*Divide et Impera* should be the motto of our Indian administration, whether political, civil or military."

Major Basu, in his famous historical work, *Rise of Christian Power in India* has quoted Lt. Col. Coke, the Commandant of Moradabad : "Our endeavour should be to uphold in full force the—for us fortunate—separation, which exists between the different riligions and races, not to endeavour to amalgamate them. 'Divide et impera' should be the principle of the Indian government".

This was middle of the nineteenth century. In the later period the British were more circumspect in the language they used. For instance, Sir John Strachey showed greater finesse when he wrote : "The existence, side by side, of these hostile elements is one of the strong points in our political position in India." Again : "The better classes of Mohammadans are a source to us of strength and not of weakness. They constitute a comparatively small but energetic minority of

the population, whose political interests are identical with ours"

As early as 1890, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan made proposal for the modification of electoral requirements of property and education in favour of Muslims, and other privileges. The *Moslem Herald* condemned this approach as something which was sure to "poison the social life of districts and villages, and make a hell of India" Obviously the author had prophetic insight into the Indian reality.

In 1906 a Muslim deputation met Lord Minto, the Viceroy, and demanded separate electorates with some other privileges. Lord Minto replied : "You justly claim that your position should be estimated not on your numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of your community, and the services it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you."

Mohammad Ali, in his presidential address to the Indian National Congress, in 1923 revealed that the Muslim deputation was a "command performance". This is corroborated by reference in a letter that Lord Morley wrote to Lord Minto at the end of 1906 : "I won't follow you again into your Mohammadan dispute. Only I respectfully remind you once more that it was your early speech about their extra claims that first started the M (Moslem) hare."

That Muslims had serious fears of being swamped by the overwhelming majority under the joint electoral system is not suggested by the actual results of elections in local bodies in early years. Even in 1910 in the United Provinces 189 Muslims and 445 Hindus were returned in the District Board elections ; 310 Muslims and 562 Hindus were returned in the municipalities. Muslims formed only 14 per cent of the electorate.

The All India Muslim League was founded in 1906, soon after the Muslim deputation to Lord Minto already referred to. Four years later J. Ramsay MacDonald, the labour party leader, who had not till then become an apostate to Socialism wrote about the same event : "The All India Muslim League was founded on Dec. 30, 1906. The political successes which have rewarded the efforts of the League...have been so singular

as to give support to a suspicion that sinister influences have been at work, that the Mohammadan leaders were inspired by certain Anglo-Indian officials, and that these officials pulled wires at Simla and in London, and of malice aforethought sowed discord between the Hindu and Mohammadan communities by showing the Mohammadans special favours"

In 1926 Lord Olivier, who had held the office of Secretary of State for India, and consequently knew the government activities from inside, wrote a letter to the *Times* (London): "No one with a close acquaintance with Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that on the whole there is a predominant bias in British officialism (sic) in India in favour of the Muslim community...largely as a makeweight against Hindu nationalism." In 1941, the *Times* again noted : "The divisions (Hindu-Muslim) exist, and British rule is certain as long as they do."

At the end of the Second World War there were clear signs of a great transformation of the scene. The naval ratings who mutinied and took the risk of being blown up by the British navy, raised the Congress, League and Communist flags on their warships. Similar things happened in many army and airforce barracks. "The Hindu-Muslim unity ruled the streets". But our recognized national leaders saw in all this only the menace of "delivering India over to the rabble". They cold-shouldered the naval mutineers but showed eagerness to welcome the Cabinet Mission, and thus stepped into the British parlour.

What happened after this had the inevitability of a Greek tragedy. Gandhiji raised an alarm, as late as in July 1947 : "Dominion status for India would stink if Britain left India split and at war within herself". In August he was trying to stem communal carnage. In September he was trying to avert a war between the two new Dominions. In October, the most powerful among his followers started a whispering campaign : "The old man is going mad". On January 12, (1948), Gandhiji started a fast, and declared.

"Death for me would be a glorious deliverance rather than that I should be a helpless witness to the destruction of India". On 30th January he was shot dead by an R.S.S.

fanatic, after one or two unsuccessful earlier attempts. The Congress Home Minister could not give him sufficient protection. Standing near Gandhiji's still bleeding dead body, Sardar Patel observed : "How good it would have been if he had passed away during his fast, rather than this thing happen to-day".

15. Armed Intervention in Kashmir

Lord Mountbatten came to Kashmir soon after announcing his plan for the partition of the country. According to Lt. Col. Bhagwan Singh, Private Secretary to Hari Singh (Maharaja) : "Mountbatten visited Kashmir in June 1947...used in vain all his charm and tact to persuade the Maharaja to join Pakistan. The Maharaja got rid of him equally tactfully by avoiding to meet him under an excuse of ill health at the time of his departure, when a final reply was to be given to him".

On this point, an independent source of information is Allan Campbell Johnson, who was on the staff of Lord Mountbatten and has provided considerable information of this period in his book *Mission with Mountbatten*. He records :

> "(Mountbatten) advised him not to make a declaration of independence, but to join one dominion or the other by the 14th of August, after finding out the will of the people, and what is important, assured him on the authority of Sardar Patel that if his decision was to throw in his lot with Pakistan and join them in advance of transfer it would not be regarded as an unfriendly act by India.... When Kak... came to Delhi in July he saw Patel, who told him that he did not want the accession of Kashmir against the people's will.... Through Mountbatten's good offices he also saw Jinnah at this time".

On August 12, 1947 the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir informed the Pakistan Government that "the J. & K. Govt. would welcome standstill agreements with Pakistan on

all matters on which there exist agreements at the present moment with the outgoing British Indian government". On August 16, the Pakistan Government formally aceepted the offer.

The Conservative press in Britain made it plain that if Kashmir could not remain "independent the natural thing for her was to accede to Pakistan..."

This estimate was, however, made by O. Orestov, *Tass* representative in Delhi, those days. He also reported :

"The rulers of Pakistan, prompted by their British advisers tried to fan the Kashmiri hatred for the Maharaja into a struggle against all Hindus generally. (During) this period Hindu-Muslim conflicts. instigated by British secret agents, were causing bloodshed in both the newly created Dominions...

But the British imperialists and their Pakistani accomplices left out of account the powerful urge for democracy which had grown up among the people of Kashmir, and the influence of the National Conference, headed by Sheikh Abdullah. It had always been in the lead in the people's struggle against the British colonisers the feudal lords and the Maharaja, and it had the ready following of the population. The National Conference regarded the people's struggle in Kashmir as a part of India's common struggle for national liberation. Its ranks included both Muslims and Hindus. In 1946, driven to desperation by the Maharaja's police regime and the oppression of the feudal lords, the people of Kashmir rose in revolt. Their struggle was led by the National Conference, which proclaimed the slogan 'Quit Kashmir' against the Maharaja and his feudal administration. By the joint efforts of the British imperialists, the Maharaja, and the Indian reactionaries this rising was brutally crushed. Sheikh Abdulla was thrown into prison..."

"In the areas along the Afghan border the British agents, holding out promises of easy plunder, incited the warlike Pathans...to march on Kashmir as 'saviours of Islam'...

"On Oct. 22 (1947) the invasion began. Some 2000 warriors of various tribes—Afridis, Mahsuds, Mohmands, etc.—equipped in Pakistan with modern weapons, trucks

and petrol, crossed the borders, seized the town of Muzaffarabad and sacked the town or Baramulla. On Oct. 26 the first detachment of Popular Guard—some armed with rifles requisitioned from the Maharaja's police, others with shot-guns, or even clubs—marched out of the city to meet the enemy. Skirmishes took place in the vicinity of the airfield. The invaders, however, were too busy looting to attack the capital immediately, and time worked for Kashmir.

"The Maharaja appealed for aid to the Government of India. In reply he was told that aid would be accorded only if Kashmir joined the Dominion of India, and if a government was set up which would enjoy the confidence of the population, and would be capable of heading the fight against the invaders. The Maharaja agreed to these conditions and formally recognized Sheikh Abdulla as the head of the provisional emergency govenment.

"On Oct. 31 (1947), a simulated uprising took place in the principality of Gilgit in the northern most section of Kashmir, a few dozen kilometres from the Soviet border. The rising was led by a British officer. On Nov. 2, the tiny principalities of Chitral, Swat and Dir proclaimed their 'independence' and announced that they were joining Pakistan. On Nov. 4 the principalities of Hunza and Nagar joined Pakistan."

In the Valley itself the outcome was a disappointment for the imperialists :

"The hopes of the British and of the Pakistan rulers that the population of Kashmir would be prompted by their religious beliefs to greet the invaders with open arms, proved unfounded. Except in the western principalities, where Pakistan propaganda had been conducted long before, the invading forces were every where resisted by the population. This was due chiefly to the democratic slogans launched by the National Conference, to which the invaders could oppose nothing but appeals to religious hatred and enmity."

The *Times* (London) reported on November 7, 1947 :

"In spite of the proximity of the raiders and comparatively

heavy fighting 4½ miles west of Srinagar, Srinagar remains calm and business continues as usual. The situation is quite unreal and can be explained by the fact that the head of the administration, Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conference followers have continued to instil confidence into the citizens."

It turned out that Sir George Cunningham, Governor of NWFP, where the invasion plan took concrete shape, had conveyed to Sir Rob Lockhart, the British C-in-C of the Indian dominion, in advance, what was being planned, through a private letter. Sir Rob conveniently 'lost' the letter and 'forgot' to convey the contents of the message to the Government of India. This disclosure was made several months after the invasion. The Government of India issued an apologetic statement on August 4, 1948 in the form of a press note : "The info mation contained in this letter was the first authoritative intimation of impending troubles in Kashmir....Almost immediately afterwards came the news of the actual invasion of the Kashmir Valley...

"While in retrospect one might regret that the letter was not preserved, the government are fully satisfied that no one sought to suppress or to conceal it."

B N Rau, two years later, made a mention in the Security Council of the part played in the invasion by Maj. Russel Haight of USA, an engineer supposed to be an employee of an American firm Morrison-Knudson Construction Co., working in Afghanistan :

"India...can if she chooses, be tough and ask for damages from the United States for the losses sustained as a result of Haight's activities not merely because of the loss of life inflicted by him, but for the entire cost of the military operation necessitated by his organization of the Azad Forces."

The offensive of the Indian troops slowed down perceptibly as soon as the Valley was cleared of the invaders. The hostilities gradually assumed the nature of a war between the two newly formed Dominions. The background to this surprising development was later thrown open by the Pakistani author Aslam Siddique. He mentions a personal letter which Sir

Douglas Gracey, the British C-in-C of the Pakistan Army, had written probably to Lord Mountbatten, or (Auchenlack) which made the point :

> "If Pakistan is not to face another serious refugee problem with about 2,750,000 people uprooted from their home; if India is not to be allowed to sit on the door step of Pakistan, likely to enter to the rear and on the flank; if civilian and military morale is not to be affected to a dangerous extent, it is imperative that the Indian army should not be allowed to advance beyond the general line Uri-Poonch-Naushehra."

Campbell Johnson throws some light on Mountbatten's role during the invasion :

> "When during the past forty-eight hours it became clear that the government were determined, against the military advice of both of their chiefs of staff (all British) and of himself to send in troops in response to a request from Kashmir for aid he returned to...about accession...He considered that it would be the height of folly to send troops into a neutral state where we (India) had no right to send them, since Pakistan could do exactly the same, which could only result in a clash of armed forces and war." Barely twelve days after the fighting started Mountbatten had a conference with Jinnah.
>
> "Mountbatten advised Jinnah on the strength of the Indian forces in Srinagar and of their likely build up in the next few days. He told him that he considered the prospect of the tribesmen entering Srinagar in any force was now remote. This led Jinnah to make his first general proposal that both sides withdraw at once and simultaneously...
>
> "On enquiry Mountbatten found that Jinnah's attitude to a plebiscite was conditioned by his belief that the combination of Indian troops in occupation and Sheikh Abdullah in that power meant the average Muslim would be far too frightened to vote for Pakistan. Mountbatten proposed a plebiscite under U.N. auspices".

Here it is only fair to recall that the Communist Party of India did issue a st ıtement in January 1948 : "Nothing can be more suicidal than reference to the Security Council of the

UNO. The call to the UNO is thus a call to imperialist intervention a call to American imperialism to intervene in Kashmir". Today no one can fail to see how timely and how prophetic this warning was.

What actually happened in the Valley during the four odd weeks between the start of the invasion and the occupation of Uri by the Indian army, has been written about, talked about, and sung about by many. The invasion did not come as a complete surprise to the National Conference leadership, nor did they fumble for ideas, or get shell-shocked by its suddenness. In fact the reactionary purpose of the Mount-batten Award, its far-reaching disruptive consequences for the people's movement, were nowhere grasped with greater clarity even by the rank and file workers, than in Kashmir because of the political experience gained, almost as soon as the Partition Plan was announced, and also it being the centeral arena of Imperialist conspiracy against the people's liberation.

The movement had been under pressure since the communal riots of March 1947 in Punjab, and they did their best to hold the virus on the other side of the border, and successfully prevented its crossing the border. One recalls the bewildered face of the Dogra doctor, serving as Superintendent of the Special Jail in Ramnagar Fort. Killing was rampant in Punjab and he found his captives of three communities living like close comrades in a serpent infested wilderness of a dilapi-dated fortress. He could not hide his astonishment that his captives could be so immune to the irrational fear and hatred that was raging all over Punjab and freely reported in the press.

As the riots spread in mid-August Hindu, Muslim and Sikh refugees from Sialkote, Rajauri, Poonch, Mirpur, Muzaffara-bad, Rawalpindi and Hazara—all found a haven in Kashmir. By the time the invasion came in October 1947, there were some 23000 of them in this oasis of communal peace in a raging hell-fire all around it. Politics of communal riots and of all communal affiliations was very well understood by the followers and workers of the National Conference movement, as well as its leaders. The only negative factor in that period was the autocracy, which perversely saw its safety in accentuat-ed communalism. Its main interest was in power, and it saw

the non-communal, national democratic movement as its main enemy. Kak oriented himself on the Residency perspectives, and so was not interested in making up with the National Conference with a view to facing a major national crisis.

The National Conference leaders were sitting ducks while a major imperialist offensive was on to crush all sources of democratic advance. There was the real prospect of the whole cadre being delivered to butchers, sustained by imperialism, most being tied up, hand and foot, in the Maharaja's jails. With all this the National Conference leadership showed the highest level of statesmanship by bending themselves backwards to satisfy the vanity of a self-seeking Prince, and yet managed to save the unity of the people when powerful disruptive forces were hell-bent on mass murder. A decisive push was given by Gandhiji, who travelled all the way to Srinagar, first time in his life. and had some straight talk with the Maharaja. It was then that Kak was dismissed, and National Conference leaders started to be released in trickles. Once out, the National Conference deputed G M Sadiq to meet Pakistani leaders in Lahore, and ask for time for all issues to be coolly discussed within the movement before a decision was taken about accession. Assurances were also sought from them that Kashmir would enjoy full internal autonomy in case the state decided to accede to Pakistan. It turned out that Pakistani leaders had such profound contempt for Kashmiris that they made only a court observation that they were all Muslims, implying they did not recognise any subdivisions among Muslims on the basis of language or culture. The reply was very well understood by the National Conference leaders, and therefore they could at once make up their minds how to face the new menacing situation.

Meanwhile some influential refugees from the N.W.F.P., with close personol contacts among the Pathan elite, reached Srinagar in the second week of October. They had personal knowledge that Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan had been recruiting tribes in the Swat valley for invasion of Kashmir. The Communist group in the National Conference issued a handbill on the 14th or 15th of October warning that an invasion was being planned to take place before the onset of winter, that only a government enjoying the confidence of the people

would be able to organise effective defence; that it was the duty of all patriots to defend the state against invasion irrespective of what the autocracy chose to do. It was exactly such a lead which Sheikh Saheb himself gave in his momentous Id speech on October 25 when the tribal invaders were approaching Baramulla. He informed the people that Uri had been occupied by the invaders; that he had requested both the Dominions to give Kashmiris enough time to think over the pros and cons of accession to one or the other Dominion, and support their immediate demand for freedom from autocracy. The Indian leadership had accepted the demand. Pakistan had ignored his request, and were trying to force accession upon Kashmir with the aid of tribal marauders. He called upon the people to use whatever weapons they could lay hands on to resist the invaders, and at the same times to maintain communal harmony. He also asked volunteers to keep an eye on fifth columnists, and guard vital installations with or without the consent and co-operation of the state government.

Within a few hours the whole atmosphere in the Valley changed. Young and old started merching, and offering for guard duties on bridges and in bazars, banks, telephone and telegraph exchanges. All the refugees who had been coming to Srinagar and other towns were disarmed. A large number of swords, axes, shot-guns and other arms were collected. The exhibition ground was used for training and lodging of volunteers, many of whom were from the Srinagar factories, schools and colleges. Gole Bagh was used for training lady volunteers. There were few among Kashmiris who knew much about arms. Soon enough we had Mohammad Akram of Baug Tehsil, Poonch, Salar of Muslim National Guard in his home district, teaching workers to fight the invaders. There were ex-servicemen like Shamjee, Mahmuda Begum's brother, Gurbax Singh, leader of Defence Industry Workers from Rawalpindi, Sher Jung, a famous revolutionary from Delhi, and several others providing the expertise. Motor vehicles, two-wheelers and four wheelers, were requisitioned from the owners. It was on one of these motor-cycles that Shaheed Sherwani spent a couple of days learning to drive,

and on the third day rushed to his home town Baramulla, only to fall into the hands of the invaders, who made a martyr of him in a gruesome manner, having failed to break his spirit by their limitless cruelty.

On the 24th of October, Hari Shingh had his last birthday Durbar, when Durbaris paid their annual Nazarana in the form of gold sovereigns. Just then the Mohra power house was occupied by the invaders, and the lights went off. During the night he left the Valley at the head of a long convoy of lorries, all those he could get hold of, carrying his own valuables, and those of the other Rajput elite, who had landed property at strategic points in the Valley. On the following day, in the evening, the Head of the Kashmir Police, a Hindu Pathan coming from the NWFP, symbolically surrendered to the National Conference. He came to the main square, now known as Lal Chowk, in a police van, got down, and in front of the Palladium cinema—where the National Conference leaders had an emergency office, shouted "Long live Sher-i-Kashmir". Then he stood at attention before Moulana Sayyed Masoodi, the General Secretary of the National Conference, and asked for his orders. His example was followed by several other officers, particularly the notorious ones who had distinguished themselves by behaving brutally with the people during the Quit Kashmir struggle. The following day the Treasury Officer came, and handed over a paltry sum, a lakh or so, to Moulana Sayyed along with a key, claiming this was all that he had in his charge. The district National Conference, had already taken charge of law and order, and safety of installations in the city against sabotage, right from the afternoon of the 24th of October. In other district towns also the National Conferrence organisation took charge of all administration from the 26th. No other organ of power functioned in the Valley till the 31st, when an Emergency Government came into existence, with the Maharaja's acquiescence, under Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Actually the National Conference organisation continued to exercise state power in the Vally till the mid-January of 1948, when Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, as Home Minister in the Emergency Cabinet, received a briefing from the Home

Ministry at Delhi, which protested strongly against the intervention of political cadres in the administration, and demanded this be stopped forthwith.

While the tribals were having an orgy of loot in Baramulla, Srinagar was so calm and seemingly unconcerned that the minority community was having a busy season of marriages, totally oblivious of the overhanging dangers. Not that there were not present in the city fifth columnists and saboteurs bent on mischief. Some were caught, and found to have the necessary supply of daggers for a stabbing orgy. Miss Strawards (popularly called 'Strawberry Miss') and Dr. Edmunds of CMS School were found, after a search, to have been conducting incriminating correspondence and possessing defence maps of the frontier area. They were forced to leave the state, and many of their documents and maps were confiscated.

On October 31, nine days after the invasion of Kashmir had begun, Sheikh Abdullah said :

"The course of action adopted by the invaders is aimed at coercing us, which cannot be accepted since it is dishonourable. This we must and will resist to the last man and the last ounce of our energy. I therefore request Mr. Jinnab to accept the democratic principle of the sovereignty of the people of our state including as it does 78% Muslims, whose free and untampered choice must count in the matter of final accession. I request him to use his influence and power to withdraw the invaders. I am ready to come to Karachi to meet him should he so desire."

Speaking on November 16, 1947 as head of the Emergency Administration, Sheikh Saheb said :

"What happened in Kashmir adds altogether a new pattern of perfidy. Those tribal Pathans equipped with mechanized weapons of war, swooped down on us, not merely as armed bandits but as a centrally directed force with the avowed object of subjugating our land to the vassalage of Pakistan at the point of the gun."

On February 5, 1948 in his speech in the Security Council Sheikh Saheb said :

"Under those circumstances both the Maharaja and the

> people requested the Govt. of India to accept accession. Pakistan has no right to say that we must do this and we must do that."

On Feb. 22, 1948 Sheikh Saheb repeated :

> "In 1944 Mr. Jinnah tried to persuade us to join with him and support his two-nation theory. But he failed. He, therefore, tried in 1947 to get Kashmir at the point of the sword, which he failed to obtain by persuasion."

On May 25, 1948 Sheikh Abdullah underlined the fact that "by her action Pakistan has permanently branded herself as an aggressor and we have made our choice and linked our destiny with India, and nothing can separate us now."

Speaking again at a press conference on September 29, 1948, Sheikh Saheb said :

> "We have burnt our boats, there is no place in Kashmir for a theocratic state. We believe in one-nation theory, and are determined to prove its truth. Kashmir will never make a plaything of India's honour." ✓

16. Emergency Administration

It has been mentioned that the communist group in the National Conference had issued a warning of the coming invasion about two weeks before it started. On October 31, 1947, just before Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was sworn in as Head of the Emergency Administration, they presented an open letter to him in which an appeal was made to organise a fifteen days' training school for 400-500 workers of the National Conference representing all *tehsils* where the programme outlined in the letter could be discussed in greater detail and modified in the light of the discussion. Some of the tentative suggestions made are reproduced here :

Our people should feel convinced that they are not fighting merely for the continuance of the old oppressive order but their own freedom....On the basis of this consciousness we should be able to build a patriotic People's Militia which can launch political as well as military offensives to defeat the politico-military offensive of the enemy. We should be able to organise a network of Village Defence Committees, and thousands of Village Militia Units in every corner of the state....

Agrarian reforms

1. Total abolition of *jagirdari* without compensation ;
2. Abolition without compensation of all landed estates where the holdings are :

(*a*)	Above 100 kanals of	Abi I	land or its equivalent				
(*b*)	,, 150 ,, ,,	Abi II	,,	,,	,,		
(*c*)	,, 200 ,, ,,	Abi III	,,	,,	,,		
(*d*)	,, 300 ,, ,,	Dry	,,	,,	,,		
(*e*)	,, 6 ,, ,,	Malyari	,,	,,	,,		

(*f*) An aggregate of any or all of the above types converted to any one of the equivalent variety

[1 Kanal=1/8th of an acre=5400 sq. ft.]

3. All holdings over and above the limits specified should be distributed under the supervision of the Village Defence Committees, in a general body meeting of the entire adult population of the village, with the following priorities specified :
   (*i*) The existing tenants of the landlord ;
   (*ii*) The landless peasants ;
   (*iii*) Peasants with the existing holdings that are uneconomic.
4. The Village Defence Committee will take up the responsibility for organizing a 'Grow More Food' campaign and also 'Food Procurement' drive.

Care of handicraft workers

Workers will be encouraged to form industrial cooperatives on the following principles :

(*i*) Share capital to be held by each individual member within the range of Re. 1 to Rs. 200 ;

(*ii*) Such individual members will have only one vote irrespective of the total value of the shares he holds ;

(*iii*) no individual shareholder is to hold more than 20% of the total share capital ;

(*iv*) each individual cooperative will be responsible to work out a proper division of labour amongst its members, and to distribute its net profits accordingly. The profit distribution will be primarily based on the work done by each member and only in the second place on the capital investment of each ;

(*v*) the *wosta* (master-craftsman) will no longer be responsible for the supply of capital and raw materials,

and will no longer take hold of finished goods for sale in the market. He will be employed by the cooperative on a fixed remuneration or on a commission basis.

(vi) the government will support the cooperative through :
  (a) subsidies or loans for the purpose of raw materials, and implements of production ;
  (b) supply of electric power to enhance the productivity of a cooperative ;
  (c) concessional freight rates will be provided :
  (d) organisation of cooperative marketing will be encouraged.

Factory workers

1. The government will take immediate steps to reopen the factories and give immediate employment to the workers by removing all hindrances in the supply of sufficient electric power and raw materials.
2. Factories abandoned by their owners and those that resist government orders, should be taken over by the government, and run under its supervision for the duration of the war with active cooperation of the workers.
3. The government will ensure that the workers are paid a reasonable minimum wage ; that the working day does not exceed eight hours ; and that workers are adequately housed. The management should also seek the active cooperation of workers in running a factory through an elected council of workers.

An effective adult literacy campaign is needed to overcome the illiteracy and backwardness of our people. *Adequate use must be made of the mother tongue for education* (*emphasis mine*).

Local self-government must be revived, based on adult suffrage, with sufficient executive and supervisory powers. This would include village panchayats.

Total mobilisation for defence

1. The present Home Guard People's Militia should be

expanded into a large army, and arrangements made for their training and front-line experience.

2. Organization of a Village Defence Committee in every village to be supervised by political workers of known integrity. Arrangements should be made for the supply of arms and training of these volunteers.

This approach was summed up by an editorial in *People's Age* of January 11, 1948, thus :

> "The game of Pakistani reactionaries and of the imperialist war-mongers can be easily defeated if the peasant masses of Kashmir are assured that feudal autocracy and jagirdari will be liquidated, land will be given to the tillers, and the complete right of self-determination granted to the various nationalities that comprise Kashmir. Kashmir can be saved only by winning over the peasants, and ending feudal autocracy and the reactionary policy of the appeasement of the Maharaja by the Indian Union government and by really liberating the peasants."

Hangovers of the Central Home Ministry

In sharp contrast to the attitude adopted in the 'Open Letter' submitted by the communist cadre of the National Conference to Skeikh Saheb, the Home Ministry in Delhi was seeking guidance from the dusty files of the British intelligence experts to meet the situation, for which there were no precedents in the country's history. They were totally unware of the critical battle for minds that was being fought in J. & K. State between the forces of imperialism and social reaction on the one hand, and the forces of liberation and national resurgence on the other. For them, the Kashmir problem was a problem for the army, and internally just a law-and-order problem. So Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, the Deputy Premier and Home Minister in the Emergency Cabinet, was called to Delhi even before the Emergency Cabinet had had its first formal meeting. The urgent problems the Home Ministry had to discuss with him were not that of the fifth columnists or morale of the civil population. Their serious worry was the institution of 'Political Commanders' in the People's Militia placed under the charge of G. M. Sadiq, Defence

Minister in the Emergency Administration. It was an intolerable red rag. What had politics to do with a Militia? Why should factory workers be serving in the militia? Why not have regular recruitment as in the para military organisations of the Indian government under the charge of army officers? Why should National Conference committees interfere in the administration? Why should the regular bureaucracy of the Maharaja's administration be short-circuited by unofficial public bodies? Above all, why should known communists be there at all, and why should communist literature circulate so freely in the state? This was Delhi's attitude at a time when all communications including mail delivery were paralysed.

So on his return from Delhi, Bakshi Saheb took over the National Militia, virtually through a coup, under his own charge, and put it under the commanders supplied by the Indian Army. Communists were made uncomfortable by various provocations. For this purpose use was made of known anti-communists. It should not surprise anyone to know that these very people were, after a few years, charged for indulging in fifth columnist activities on behalf of Pakistan, and awarded long terms of imprisonment by courts.

The Home Ministry was worried by the susceptiblities of the Maharaja and the feudal aristocracy. They insisted that a regular cabinet be set up in March 1948 by virtue of a regular proclamation from Hari Singh. At their insistence he was also invited to participate in the celebrations of Liberty Day in May 1948

Orestov, the *TASS* correspondent in Delhi, whom we have already quoted, was in Srinagar for the second time for the Liberty Day celebrations in May, 1948. But he found the situation vastly different from what he had seen in the first week of November 1947. He wrote:

"Where were the enthusiasm and fighting spirit that had carried away both townsfolk and peasants? It had given way to disillusionment and despondency. The peasants, disappointed in their hope that the abolition of the *jagirdari* holdings would be followed by the abolition of landed proprietorship generally, grumbled and complained. They could not understand what had come over Sheikh Abdullah.

"The workers and handicraftsmen demanded jobs. The intellectuals, who had been counting on the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a democratic republic were openly dissatisfied. The merchants were displeased because the war dragged on, threatening them with bankruptcy. 'Down with United Nations' caught my eye. This, too, was typical of the mood prevailing among the Kashmiri people....

"Quite a crowd collected at the mass meetings in Srinagar on 'Liberty Day.' The government and its guests were seated on a high platform. The guests included representatives from the Soviet Union, Burma, the Indonesian Republic and China. The countries of the Anglo-American block demonstratively ignored the invitation sent to them, as did the neighbouring Muslim states, Iran and Afghanistan....

"People waited impatiently, eager to hear what Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah would have to say. But... neither the one nor the other could offer anything new... Pressed by the Indian government Sheikh Abdullah had invited the Maharaja to attend the 'Liberty Day' festivities at Srinagar. The Maharaja was comfortably housed in Srinagar palaee and was visited there by Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah..."

Even at this point of time Pandit Nehru was aware of the subtle change of mood among the people. On May 30, 1 48 he wrote to Sardar Patel : "I am worried about the internal political situation in Kashmir. Owing to lack of supplies and trade, and continuous radio and other propaganda from Pakistan, the morale of the civil population is rather low. Pakistan's radio from Murree carries on vicious and intensive propaganda, and there is nothing to meet it on our side."

Patel-Abdullah tussle

But the Home Ministry had other worries, now that the Indian army was within the state boundaries. Sheikh Abdullah's Government had deprived the *jagirdars* of their estates. The Maharaja had withheld his assent. So on May 4, 19-8, V. Shankar, Private Secretary to Sardar Patel worte to Sheikh Saheb : "Hon. Minister (Sardar Patel) has asked me to request

you to see Panditji about it (withholding of assent to the resumption of *jagirs*) inviting his attention in particular to the fact that these *jagirs* are being sought to be resumed without any payment of compensation whatever, which is quite contrary to anything that we are doing in the Indian Dominion. It is also to be borne in mind that probably the *jagirdars* would be mostly non-Muslims, and this measure would probaly create a certain amount of discontent and ill-feeling against the government among the minority community."

Syed Mir Qasim, former Chief Minister, in his autobiography mentions an incident in which Sheikh Abdullah and Sardar Patel had a direct confrontation. This was in the context of Sheikh Saheb's demand for the end of the hereditary ruling dynasty of the state. Sardar Patel is said to have pleaded his inability to accept this demand because at the time of accession he had promised Hari Singh that none of his interests and privileges would be touched after the accession. So the Maharaja would remain in the capacity of a Rajpramukh. Sheikh Saheb was angry and got up to leave. He told Sardar Patel : "You have given your word to the Maharaja, while I have given word to the people. You carry out your promise and I shall carry out mine." We do not have the date of the above encounter, but we do know that on August 5, 1948 Sheikh Abdullah wrote to Sardar Patel :

> "If the States' Ministry wants me to drown myself in the Dal (Srinagar's famous lake) I for one am not going to do so. I will resign and tell the people that I have done so because I have been hampered both here and in Delhi, and they can go to Pakistan or the Indian Dominion as they like..."

In a press conference in Delhi held on September 29, 1948, Sheikh Abdullah is reported to have said that "neither was his stand against the ruling powers of the Maharaja getting adequate backing nor was his bold and progressive economic programme in the state receiving full approval."

The *Nation* commented : "This is most serious.... This means, if anything, that in the opinion of Sheikh Abdullah India will lose the plebiscite in Kashmir if she does not concentrate on the political and economic war. It means that all

our sacrifices, the many precious heroic lives lost in Kashmir, the huge money spent, the great hardships borne by our people, the high principles we have endlessly cherished and championed will come to naught only because of our softness for a Maharaja and all that he stands for, for our refusal to back Abdullah in his socio-economic programme."

Much more light on the whole situation is shed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in a D.O. letter of October 7, 1948, which he addressed to Sardar Patel in his capacity as the Home Minister. Relevant extracts are reproduced here :

"The cabinet recommendations regarding resumption of *jagirs* and *mukarraries* have not been confirmed by His Highness even though several months have passed since the case was submitted to him with regard to our tenancy reforms, a new bill was submitted to H.H. some time ago.... His assent to this measure...has not been received so far.... The Kashmir Alienation of Land Act...was to expire on the 2nd of October... We sent a draft to H.H. by the middle of September proposing prohibition of alienation for a period of six months to enable us to examine the whole question...H.H. has not given his assent to this ordinance also, and the existing law of alienation now expired...

"Our economic programme is only too well known. It is my firm conviction that it was our rigid adherence to that programme that has saved us from the orgy of communalism during the last crisis. That programme hits feudalism and lays the axe at the roots of vested interests. It was only to be expected that elements affected by that programme will try to resist it both outside and inside the state. These vested interests would prefer Pakistan to India in the hope that they can flourish there at least for the time being. I see unmistakable signs that these vested interests have combined and are engaged in an attempt to so manipulate the position that Kashmir be surredered to Pakistan...

"The 'Eastern Economist' of August 15, 1948, has published an article entitled 'Kashmir and Hyderabad'...and makes the suggestion that a gift of a part of our territory should be made to Pakistan...It also advocates a friendly settlement with the organizers of the raiders because...'large areas in Kashmir

may opt for Pakistan...' Similarly 'Times of India' has publicised an article by A.M. Thakur which says : 'As India's right over Hyderabad is unquestionable so is Pakistan's over Kashmir...the example of NWFP is sufficient for our guidance. Let us not be misled by wishful thoughts and mere hopes...'

"I cannot imagine a more glaring example of creating a sense of frustration than this...

"I did say that we deserted the Frontier Province...To my mind the Congress stand vis-a-vis NWFP cannot be justified. Every province decided to opt for either Dominion on the basis of the majority vote of her legislature. Why was this not done in the case of NWFP, and why was a decision taken on the basis of a referendum in this case alone? Why did Congress agree to this discriminatory treatment? Again, since West Punjab had opted for Pakistan, and the NWFP had no access left to India, why was not Badshah Khan's demand for Azad Pathanistan supported by the Congress? We are engaged in a life and death struggle ... You cannot expect me to watch unmistakable attempts to sabotage us and remain quiet...

"The public have a right to know from me that power has now finally passed into the hands of the people, that the subterfuge of 'resolved' and 'unresolved' subjects, the crippling encumbrances of the privy purse, and royal family allowances and a host of other unconscionable burdens doubling to breaking point the backs of the poor starving famine-stricken people are lifted once and for all now that I am in a position to deliver the goods. That alone can give the lie direct to the Pakistan propaganda linking my name with all the misdeeds of the previous regime, and out to show that H.H. has parted with the shadow and not the substance of power. We have to carry the people with us and I have always appealed to you and the Government of India to back us without stint and without reserve. Kashmir can be saved only in this way and this is the only way to vindicate the noble ideal for which the war of Kashmir is being fought."

In his reply Sardar Patel (only 'draft' available?) says : "Maharaja...referred to States' Ministry.. regarding jagirs etc...

and discussed with V.P. Menon and Gopalaswamy Ayyangar in July...(It) has not been possible to finalise the views of the States' Ministry...because obviously it has certain all-India considerations from which you may be immune but (by) which we are bound...As a constitutional head (Maharaja) is entitled to advise and warn..."

Nehru in a separate letter (to Sardar Patel) draws attention to the Praja Parishad demand for a zonal plebiscite, and its being financed by the Maharaja. He also quotes Gen. Cariappa for the existence of a tussle between the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah, and that it was having a bad effect on the army...that the Maharaja's brother-in-law was openly carrying on a campaign against Sheikh Abdullah and his government... using pamphlets of this kind ..."an open conflict is going on in the state between the adherents of the Maharaja and the adherents of Sheikh Abdullah ..Relief work (is) conducted on communal lines Yuvaraj is getting mixed up with this business..."

From the foregoing, it is clear that the movement that had challenged to a halt the Pakistani armed invasion was in a process of disintegration because of the scheming and reactionary attitude of the Home Ministry, which did not have a perspective for the country in which free and liberated people of the Jammu-Kashmir state had a place as equals.

17. The USA Steps In

Earlier it has been pointed out that the Indian forces slowed down their advance after re-occupying Baramulla, and then came to a dead stop at Uri. If they had continued their advance to the state border there were no forces capable of resisting them. The raiders, after their defeat in the outskirts of Srinagar had made an about turn and rushed for the border, which they had crossed at the time of the invasion in October. Uri marks the end of the Valley, the Kashmiri speaking area. Geographically it is accessible from Poonch in the Western Punjabi speaking area, Srinagar, and also from Muzaffarabad, on the confluence of the Jhelum and the Kishen Ganga. Its occupation would normally facilitate the occupation of the whole state territory. But precisely at this point the Indian government called a halt to the advance of the army. This mystified friend and foe alike. Curiously, the possibility of such an eventuality had been predicted by the *TASS* correspondent 0. Orestov, who visited Srinagar in the first week of November 1947, even before the decisive battle to save Srinagar had been fought. When the author questioned the basis of his apprehensions he made the cryptic observation that occupation of the whole state by the Indian army might create distrust between the three parties which had come to an agreement on the implementation of the Mountbatten Award. He drew pointed attention to the fact that NWFP was still under Congress rule, and had a common border with the Muzaffarabad area. However we have many

more clues available now. Campbell Johnson, for one, informs us :

"As a footnote to these international developments it is encouraging to learn from the situation reports that no attack has developed on Uri, and that the Indian troops there have made no contact with hostile forces, for Mountbatten continues to feel that this would be the event which might well touch off the wider conflict.... Attlee has, as Mountbatten anticipated, turned down the proposal of a lightning personal intervention, feeling that there is no specific role which he would be able to play save that of conciliator in general terms, and he prefers to rely on the proper channels of the United Nations. He has, however, sent an excellently worded message to Nehru urging caution. On receipt of this reply the government have decided to proceed with their appeal to U.N. without waiting any longer."

Kashmir and UNO

The issue was duly referred to the United Nations Security Council. Acharya Kripalani, who was the Congress president at this time, made the following observation a few years later :

"Why was the Kashmir issue referred to the U.N.O. ? This is something known only to a few in the Government of India. Evidently it was to avoid trouble with Pakistan. But this, as after events have shown, could not be avoided. It is believed that the reference was made on the advice of the British."

For the naive the British had by then realized the folly of sticking to an empire, cut their losses and made their exit. The tenaciousness of imperialism to safeguard its interests through stratagems and proxies when direet subjugation is not feasible, is often missed. That for the British, the withdrawal from India did not mean lack of interest in further developments in the country, can be clearly seen from a remark of Russel K. Haight of Denver, Colorado, USA, who participated in the tribal invasion of Kashmir : "British Intelligence was much interested in the information I gave

them about communists in Kashmir. They already knew most of what I had to say, but they asked me to work for more."

Cold reality sometimes reaches even the hardened reactionaries. Some years later even the DAWN of Karachi made the following comment :

"Imperialism is untouched by scruples of any kind and in the particular case of Kashmir where the dispute is a deliberate creation of the British imperialists Britain retains her tactical ascendancy over both Bharat and Pakistan by blowing hot and cold air down the neck of each by turns. The part which Lord Mountbatten played in creating a situation in Kashmir, which would keep Bharat and Pakistan at perpetual loggerheads has often been commented upon.... Throughout the past four and a half years Britain has accentuated the conflict over Kashmir, instead of helping to reso've it."

The Americans were waiting for just this opportunity; it was provided to them by the Indian reference to UNO, of its complaint against Pakistani aggression. As early as January 10, 1948, the 'National Herald' reported :

"Senator Warren Austin, the US representative at the UNO in a personal and off the record talk had been taking interest in such details as whether any force might be required to restrain Pakistan, and how an armed force could be raised under the auspices of the U.N."

The UN Security Council in its resolution of January 17, 1948, asked India and Pakistan to "take immediately all measures in their power, including appeals to the population, to improve the situation and to refrain from making any statements, or taking any measures, or allowing any measures to be taken which might worsen the situation."

On this USSR representative, Andrei Gromyko commented :

"This new gesture would not add anything to what has already been done......We need a resolution which will deal with substance and help restore good relations between the two governments."

Later Van Langhenave (Belgium) introduced a resolution recommending setting up of a UN Commission of three

members...to take up the matter. Here Andrei Gromyko intervened again and said : "This makes it formally a Security Council Commission but in effect it will work independent of it and its relations will be merely on paper. As in the case of the Indonesian Commission, it will work on its own and only inform the Security Council occasionally."

In order to guard against this danger the Soviet delegate suggested that the Commission be composed of Council Members whether three, five, or the whole eleven but the Anglo-American majority in the Security Council did not accept the Soviet suggestion. India acquiesced in the Anglo-American move, and ignored the Soviet suggestion.

On January 15, 1948, Gopalaswamy Ayyangar (India) pleaded : "We have referred to the Council a simple and straightforward issue. The withdrawal and expulsion of the raiders from the soil of Kashmir, and the immediate stoppage of the fight, are the first and only tasks to which we have to address ourselves."

Anglo-American game

On January 29, 1948, Langhenave introduced two resolutions in the Security Council. One of them asked for the restoration of peace and order. The second asked for "holding a plebiscite by the two governments, in co-operation with one another and the Commission". The Indian government did not categorically reject this formulation, but made some fumbling protest. The US representative, Warren Austin, adopting an aggressive posture, remarked : "How are you going to ask the tribesmen to retire ? Only when they are satisfied that there will be a fair plebiscite assured through an interim government, can you have a peaceful settlement..." Noel Baker for the U.K. came to his support with the remark :

"The main thing is the plebiscite itself...The plebiscite is a vital part of the whole settlement......This plebiscite must inspire confidence in everybody, including those fighting. I, therefore, arrive at the conclusion as other members that impartial interim administration arrangements must be made."

Commenting on this, the Times (London) correspondent reported from Lake Success : "The crucial question remains, as before, the way in which the plebiscite is to be conducted on the issue of Kashmir's accession to India or Pakistan." American Montreal Daily Star reported : "All the conciliation proposals thus far have concentrated on the establishment of a neutral regime to govern Kashmir."

On this point the U.S. representative, Warren Austin, was specific : "Arraage an interim government that is recognized as free from the smell of brimstone, as nearly impartial and perfect as two countries like India and Pakistan can make it, in which the rest of the world will have confidence as being fair." To this the *New York Herald Tribune* added : "Such a regime would have to be as nearly impartial as possible, and the two countries might want it to function under the aegis of the Security Council.''

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah himself reported : "Mr. Warren Austin insisted on a neutral administration for Kashmir, which, he frankly said, would include a few members of the Security Council."

Finding himself badly entrapped Gopalaswamy Ayyangar sought an adjournment to enable him to consult his government at Delhi. "You can't go home whenever you feel like it", barked the Columbian delegate, Dr. Alfonso Lopez, and provocatively continued : "For Ayyangar to book his passage without first hearing the wishes of the Security Council is to flout that Council. For that body's own dignity it should meet again tomorrow, and keep on meeting till it has reached some decision." To this Ayyangar humbly made the submission : "My country has not been treated with the dignity to which it is entitled. A simple request for time to consult with the home government was being examined with great suspicion. I have been too much twitted today."

At this point the Ukrainian delegate, Tarasenko, intervened to rescue him : "There was no doubt about the need for adjournment. And the Council should not even try to limit the period of adjournment, as it could not fix the time required to consult with the home government. If the Anglo-American majority was not prepared to agree to this plain and simple request, let

them refuse it openly. Let votes be taken and recorded on this request." Only then was the adjournment agreed to.

Referring to this decision the Montreal Daily Star observed: "This decision, which was accepted with relief by everybody, reserves to the Council the right to re-open the debate at any time, with or without Ayyangar, if the news from Kashmir should warrant it."

Pandit Nehru wryly commented : "Instead of discussing and deciding our reference in a straightforward manner, the nations of the world sitting on the Security Council got lost in power politics."

The Times (London) reported : "A profound shock has been administered to Indian opinion by the course which the discussions at Lake Success have followed."

Kingsley Martin in (*New Statesman and Nation*), commented : "India deserved to have its appeal honestly considered and not side-tracked. The Security Council's refusal to face the straight issue put to it has convinced almost everyone in India that the case has not been considered on its merits but subordinated to the use of power politics. In particular, it is said that one of the underlying factors has been the Anglo-American concern about bases in Pakistan."

Mountbatten, as always, was alert to the impact of these happenings on the Indian people. Campbell Johnson informs us that at a staff meeting on February 17, 1948, he shared his concern with his staff, as stated here : "...A new danger... Various suspicions seeping into the minds of the Indian government and the politically conscious public...taken together could well develop into a major frontal attack on Indo-British good will...

"The suspicion that the UNO is being made the forum for the promotion of international power politics...Warren Austin and Noel Baker (are)...unashamedly pro-Pakistan for a variety of unedifying reasons...

"From this disillusionment...genuinely and rationally felt belief is spreading...that India has most to hope, whether in terms of mediation or even of veto, from Soviet Russia and her satellites." A very perceptive observation, indeed !

On March 8, 1948, the Anglo-American mouthpiece, *States-*

man of Calcutta announced a 'New Approach to Kashmir Question'. Actually it was a cunning manoeuvre resorted to, through the agency of the Kuomintang representative Dr. Tsiang, who introduced a new resolution in the Security Council on March 18, 1948. About this resolution the *Times* commented : "The plebiscite administration will probably prove the greatest obstacle to India's acceptance of the plan, since it would commit her to the virtual suppression of the ordinary powers of the Kashmir government over its military and police forces in favour of an authority which though nominally a part of the government would in practice be responsible to the Security Council."

The resolution proved to be a well-laid trap for India, and Gopalaswamy duly walked into it. At this, the *Hindustan Times* was ecstatic, and called the move : "...first serious attempt to solve the dispute on a reasonable basis" (which) "should be accepted by self-respecting and peace-loving nations."

Once the bait was taken, the Anglo-American majority presented a fresh resolution in which the powers of the UN Plebiscite Administrator were specified in detail, particularly the extent of the control over the armed forces, police, and the judiciary. As often in his career, Nehru's spontaneous reaction was most perceptive and so strongly adverse : "The only course now open to the Indian government...was to oppose it completely..."

What happened after this initial impulse is recorded by Campbell-Johnson in these words : "Mountbatten, with his overwhelming persistence and flair for argument in detail... finally prevailed on Nehru to break down and localise his objections under four specific headings...three of which seen as expressions of Government of India's desire not to allow a whittling down of Sheikh Abdullah's authority...Mountbatten had also been instrumental in securing Nehru's agreement that the proposed plebiscite commission should be allowed to come to India..."

This resolution was passed by the Anglo-American majority in the Security Council on August 21, 1948 in the face of India's objections. The General Council of the National

Conference rejected it. In its resolution it called upon Sheikh Abdullah's government, further broadened on April 8, 1948, to "mobilize the entire nation and arm the people for this purpose."

The Government of India, as usual, had its own super-sophisticated approach, and welcomed the Security Council's decision to send a Commission to India, Pakistan and Kashmir. Nehru, in a telegram, wired on June 26 :

"My government note that the Commission is coming to the Indian sub-continent with the most sincere desire to be of real service to them as well as to the Pakistan government for the settlement of the situation in Kashmir...The Government of India will be glad to confer with the Commission when it arrives in Delhi." The *Times* (London) carried the useful information ; "Sheikh Abdullah's supporters were sternly told to abstain from hostile demonstrations."

Further elucidation came on the following day :

"In recent weeks there has been some softening in the attitude towards the Commission...India's reception...would be 'correct but not cordial'...while in Kashmir itself Sheikh Abdullah's regime was averse to allowing the Commission to set foot in the state and felt that public resentment might take the form of a black flag demonstration...

"The Indian Cabinet...while reserving its objections in principle to the Security Council resolution on the Kashmir dispute, decided to extend all facilities and courtesies to the Commission while on Indian soil."

In April 1948, the Indian Army launched an offensive in the province of Jammu as well as Kashmir. On April 21, Rajouri was captured. At this point Pakistan moved its regular armed forces to the front.

When the UNCIP landed in Karachi on July 5, 948, Sir Zafrullah Khan confessed to the Commission that three Pakistani brigades had been on Kashmir territory as an act of self-defence.

The Commission on arrival in New Delhi on July 10 asked both sides to refrain from taking any offensive action, and the Indian army refrained from further advance. This gave rise to resentment in the armed forces.

On August 13, 1948, the UNCIP Commission asked for forty military observers and an adviser of the rank of a general. M. Jacob Malik (U.S.S.R.) was the chairman for that month. He proposed to the Council that the military observers be drawn from the five countries (Argentina, Belgium, Columbia, US and Czechoslovakia) who constituted the Commission. This had been done in the case of Palestine. The Anglo-American group rejected this suggestion. In fact, Gen. McArthur was keen to send some of his men from the Far East. The observers were chosen from the USA, Canada, Australia, Belgium and Norway—all within US sphere of influence.

Nehru raised with the Commission the question of sovereignty over the area occupied by the Pakistani forces. In a gratuitous gesture—like throwing a bone to a barking dog—he volunteered to make an exception of Gilgit and other 'northern areas', that is, areas separating Kashmir from the Soviet Union and China, in staking his claim on the sovereignty of the Jammu & Kashmir State. This gesture also did not propitiate the imperialists so as to give the Indian case a fair hearing. It could have encouraged them to keep up the pressure. The *Economist* (London) of August 14, commented :

> "Presumably the Imperial General Staff recognizes the Importance of the strategic and political position of this part of the Commonwealth. Apart from the broad fact that Pakistan is the largest and perhaps now the most influential Muslim state, Karachi provides an excellent harbour, commanding the approaches to the Persian Gulf with its oil installations, while the NWFP and West Punjab are situated only a few hundred miles from the highly industrialized areas of Russian Turkistan.... How then does India fit into this picture ?.... The answer seems to be that India does not fit at all".

The Commission set the aim before it of committing the two governments to a cease-fire, followed be a truce, followed by steps to prepare for the plebiscite. Its technique was to give one set of assurances and clarifications to one government, while giving exactly the opposite set to the other. It did, however, manage to get the two governments to commit that on

the first of January, 1949, Gen. Sir Roy Bucher (for India) and Gen. Sir Douglas Gracey (for Pakistan) would order a cease-fire one minute before midnight. This order was communicated vide a 'Top Secret' telegram 220835/Mos, dated December 30, 1948.

After this decision the Commission threw all its weight through its resolutions of August 13, 1948 and of January 5, 1949, to push through the appointment of the Plebiscite Administrator before the truce proposals could be implemented. Dr. Lozano and M. Colbian, both UNCIP members, pleaded with the Government of India : "The announcement of a Plebiscite Administrator of high standing would have an excellent psychological effect." The Government of India, however, declined to permit this appointment *till the truce* terms embodied in the August 13 resolution, as elucidated by Dr. Lozano, were carried out by Pakistan *i.e.*, all armed personnel from the occupied Kashmir were evacuated. Meanwhile, Admiral Chester Nimitz, former Chief of the Naval Operations of the USA, was appointed Plebiscite Administrator for Jammu & Kashmir with a salary of $45,000 a year. The Admiral himself expressed his impatience publicly to reach Srinagar.

In December 1949, the UNCIP by a majority vote decided to take the course of arbitration on preconditions for a truce. This had been splashed by the American press as early as in June 1949. Dr. Chyle, representative of the Czechoslovak government (nominated by the Government of India, Argentina having been nominated by the Dominion of Pakistan) on the UNCIP, objected with the thoughtful argument: "In any arrangement of a truce by means of arbitration there was a great possibility that the truce arbiter could practically become the arbiter of the dispute as a whole". Objecting to the U.S. nominee's plan of arbitration, Dr. Chyle observed : "There exists...a legal and a moral duty to send invitations to both governments to attend a joint political meeting before taking into consideration any other solution".

The Commission majority evaded this by making a precondition of a successful termination of the Karachi military conference called to fix a cease-fire line for such a meeting. This

was a position which Dr. Chyle did not accept. The Karachi military conference, however, succeeded in evolving an agreeed formula on the demarcation of the cease-fire line. Agreement of the Indian government, both to the cease-fire as well as the delineation of the cease-fire line, was secured by discreetly pointing out the dependence of the Indian air force for its aviation fuel on the Anglo-American controlled supplies.

August 22, 1949, was fixed for a joint Political Conference without the agreement of the US representative. It was, however, suddenly cancelled on August 18. Objection to this was recorded by Dr. Chyle, who took the position that the Commission had no right to cancel the Conference.... It could only be done by the two participating governments. On August 23, the *New York Times* flashed the news ; "Nimitz as Arbiter in Kashmir Urged". The *Tribune* came out with : "UN Commission to Propose His Appointment". The Commission felt concerned at this advance publicity. It was on August 29 that the proposal was drawn up by it, in one of its secret sessions, with a view to presenting it to the Governments of India and Pakistan, but was in fact placed at the disposal of the governments of UK and USA. Dr. Chyle charged : "Verbatim text of the secret arbitration memorandum came into the hands of the British High Commissioners in New Delhi and Karachi at the same time as, or even sooner than, it was officially presented to the Indian Government. President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee made use of it, in a synchronous action, for 'public interventionary pressure'. The Conservative journal *Time and Tide* of London threw some light on the background : "Four main trade routes to Central Asia pass through Kashmir. A few miles beyond the northern border lies the Soviet Union...Both Great Britain and the United States are aware of this situation and that explains the Truman-Attlee demarche respectively on August 31 and September Ist, 1949". Dr. Chyle observed : "The intervention by President Truman and the British P.M. was only made possible on the basis of precise and timely information emanating from the Commission itself".

The Nation of September 4, 1949, reported : "The way is being laid for an award in Kashmir similar to the Radcliffe

Award.... Truman's pressure was accompanied by the offer to get India elected to the Security Council provided that she settled her quarrel with Pakistan".

It is noticeable that President Truman's letter to Pandit Nehru was delivered by the American Ambassador on the very day Gen. Cariappa was decorated with the American award of 'Legion of Honour'. Actual texts of Truman's and Attlee's letters to Nehru and Liaquat Ali were not published. *UPA*, however, reported from Washington : "President Truman in letters to the heads of the Indian and Pakistani governments is understood to have stated that a continuance of the wrangle for control of the state constituted a threat to the peace of all South-east Asia... One of the main features of the new policy is expected to be the establisment of a 'security zone' round Communist China by promoting stability and democracy in the area bordering China".

Pandit Nehru's reaction this time revealed a new sharpness appropriate to a situation when the imperialists had suffered a colossal disaster in the vast expanses of China :

> "I am surprised at the intervention of President Truman and Mr. Attlee in the Kashmir issue... It is not right to sidetrack the basic cause of conflict. Such a situation makes us restless and uneasy".

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed called it a serious intervention in the Kashmir dispute," The Annual Session of the National Conference in September 1949...viewed the intervention with suspicion and anger."

One more attempt by the U.S. to foist Admiral Nimitz on Kashmir as the official UN Arbitrator failed. Imperialism, however, never gives up so long as there is a chance of success, howsoever slight. The four members presented their majority report to the Security Council in December, 1949. They recommended, for obvious reasons, considering the unforgetable lesson taught to them by Dr. Chyle, that a one-man commission be appointed and entrusted with the pursuit of the unresolved question. The fifth member, Dr. Chyle, not susceptible to imperialist influence, submitted a minority report. In his report he arrived at the conclusion : "It was not a lack of flexibility but rather too much flexibility demonstrated by so many and

so important clarifications, elucidations, etc., which considerably contributed to undermine the Commission's position, as a result of a vain attempt to please both parties to the dispute at the same time." This conclusion was hardly different from that of the *Times* which commented : "The Commission tried to be all things to all men, with the result that it lost face and got nowhere". Dr. Chyle made the following recommendation : "After the experience of the past it is quite clear that the new mediation organ must be really independent and untrammelled by any outside influence.... A guarantee of full independence would be enjoyed by a Commission consisting of representatives of all the members of the Security Council."

The Security Council meeting took place on December 17, 1949. It is remarkable and not without a sinister meaning that the Indian representative completely ignored Dr. Chyle's report, although Czechoslovakia was a member of the Commission at the instance of India, and was expected to guard its interests, which it did. The Anglo-American majority did not formally discuss the majority report, just to make sure that the minority view was also buried without letting all its contents be publicised, thereby exposing Anglo-American intrigues. The one-man Commission that replaced the UNCIP was Gen. McNaughton, who presented his demilitarisation proposals. Sir B. N. Rau, who replaced Gopalaswamy Ayyangar as the representative of the Government of India, commented : "The net effect of these proposals is to eliminate or neutralise every one of the assurances relied upon by India." Sir Alexander Cadogan (U.K.) observed : "In regard to the northern areas (*i.e.*, Gilgit and Skardu) my government is impressed by the view given on page 273 of the Commission's report that the entry of Indian forces into the area north of the cease-fire line would almost inevitably lead to a renewal of hostilities...It will be remembered that all the members of the Commission except one (*i.e.*, Czechoslovakia) felt that the Government of India ought, in these circumstances, to be willing to waive their claim, which has, in any event, to be considered afresh"

The Security Council passed a resolution on March 14, 1950, sponsored by the US representative...to place before India

and Pakistan any suggestion which in his opinion "was likely to lead to the solution of the dispute". Before the resolution was passed Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State wrote to the States' Ministry in Delhi :

"The one-man mediator...has been invested with arbitrary powers to arrogate to himself the position of a final arbitrator on the outstanding points of dispute, as well as the authority to interpret the terms of the aggreements so far reached between the two governments....Since all the suggestions for settlement of the dispute which have come from the governments of the USA and the UK as well as their proteges have consistently favoured Pakistan there is reason to believe that the appointment of the mediator will also be influenced by this consideration....

"In seeking India's agreement to the latest proposals, it is clear that she is sought to be hustled into a commitment, from which she will not be able to retract later. The absence of the Soviet delegation from the Security Council is being taken advantage of in order to cut off all support to India's case on its merits....

"The Soviet delegation has made it clear that any decision arrived at in their absence would be unacceptable to them, and in case India agrees to the proposals she will unnecessarily antagonize them and at the same time gain nothing in return...It is therefore our considered opinion that the present resolution of the Security Council, based as it is on untenable assumptions of the McNaughton proposals, is totally unacceptable to us. We want to make it clear once again that any solution which ignores the basic complaint of India, seeks to violate the integrity of the state and the sovereignty of its lawful government, will only perpetuate the conflict in Kashmir and such concessions would constitute a breach of the basic principles of the UN Charter."

Just over a week after this, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad told a press correspondent : "The Anglo-American powers have threatened India with stoppage of petrol and many other commodities she is getting from them....The Anglo-American bloc wanted to bind its decision on India by threats and

coercion."

The government of India did, however, reject the McNaughton formula for demilitarization, and the General's recommendation that the northern areas be left under the control of the "Azad" authorities. The Security Council then appointed Sir Owen Dixon as the new mediator. Long before Sir Owen Dixon, the new UN emissary was appointed by the Security Council to take up the task of mediation between India and Pakistan, Walter Lippman, a well known American journalist, had put forth a new approach on the Kashmir problem in the Washington Post. He wrote : "It is not at all impossible to settle the Kashmir dispute by what may be described as mediation, but in fact would be arbitration. The beginning is to recognize that the state of J & K is not a rational or natural entity. They are not one geographic, linguistic or religious community. They are in fact a mosaic of distinct regions.... Thus it follows inexorably, I believe, that the princely state of J & K can be and should be partitioned to make a settlement."

Sir Owen Dixon arrived in the sub-continent on May 27, 1950. *Times* reported from Karachi : "Should Sir Own Dixon decide that the Indian and Pakistani views are incompatible, and yet feel it worthwhile to attempt a solution of the Kashmir issue other than through a general plebiscite, there are one or two propositions left open to him. Of these the most obvious is partition, or partition combined with a plebiscite in the Vale of Kashmir." The same correspondent wrote about a week later : "Sir Owen is now thought to have shifted his enquiries to the possibility of partition, or a solution in which partition would be combined with a plebiscite in a limited area or areas." A similar report appeared in the *Bharat* (Bombay) from its special correspondent in London : "Prior to his departure for the Indian sub-continent, Anglo-American representatives and other statesmen at the UN, privately and unofficially, suggested to Sir Owen a new compromise formula to resolve the Kashmir dispute, it is understood." The *New York Herald Tribune* wrote : "The ideal solution, most Americans are probably inclined to believe, would be a complete withdrawal of Pakistani and Indian troops, a temporary

administration by the UN, and an early plebiscite under UN auspices." The *Times* wrote again : "If it came to a partition, the Vale of Kashmir would be the question mark. A local plebiscite might be held, but it might involve communal strife with *Quran* versus *Kaffir* as its slogan. As an alternative, there is the possibility of an interregnum or neutral mandate in the Vale for the next five or ten years, during which time the people could make up their minds where they wished to go. And if they ultimately decided that they wished to go to neither side, but preferred to remain autonomous, a *common playground for summer holidays and winter sports* for all the world to enjoy, might that not be the final solution." (Emphasis mine). The *Glasgow Herald* was more specific. In its issue of August 25, 1950 it opined : "If a plebiscite proved impracticable even there (i.e., the Kashmir Valley) the alternative possibility exists of turning the Vale into a...'free territory' of sorts, at least until feelings in Kashmir at large had returned to normal."

In his report to the Security Council, Owen Dixon dropped a hint about what he was up to : "Only if and when I was satisfied that no such agreement could be brought about and that all real chance of it was at an end, *ought I to turn to some* form of settlement other than a plebiscite of the whole state."

When Dixon's proposals, involving an open, categorical demand for the suppression of the Kashmir Government by a UN administration were rejected, he brought forward his actual plan : "...I would use for the limited plebiscite area (meaning Kashmir Valley and some adjacent areas—author). I intend to provide that an administrative body consisting of UN officers should be set up in the limited area. The Plebiscite Administrator would be at the head of the body. The body will carry on the functions of the government in the limited area until the poll was declared...for the limited area the U.N. Administrator would for the time being be responsible for the working of the machinery...." On India's objection that Pakistan had no legal or moral right to interfere in the plebiscite and that only the people of Kashmir should be allowed to take part in the campaign, Dixon declared that both countries had equal interest in the result...that the Kashmir people could not be relied upon to meet outside pressure in voting because "*they are*

not high spirited people of an independent or resolute temper." (Emphasis mine).

Sheikh Abdullah later, commenting on the powers of the Plebiscite Administrator, observed : "After the bitter and gruesome experience of Korea it is legitimate for the people of the State to fear that planting of another McArthur on the tender soil of Kashmir would reduce the state to a bitter object of international controversy."

Both India and Pakistan accepted the principle of partition and limited plebiscite. But the central plan for establishing UN authority in the Valley was rejected by the Government of India. Because of it Dixon reported failure of his mission to the Security Council.

The National Conference General Council voiced strong opposition to the dismemberment of the state in its resolution passed in late October 1950. It called for convening a sovereign Constituent Assembly to take final decisions on all questions.

The Security Council met on February 21, 1951, when the Chairman, Sir Gladwyn Jebb (U.K.) observed : "...We find it difficult to reconcile the Kashmir National Conference resolution with the agreed form of the settlement, and my Government have felt some anxiety lest in Kashmir the state authorities should embark on an independent action, which would be a challenge to the authority of the Security Council and of the United Nations as a whole."

The *Manchester Guardian* was equally hostile : "The Security Council could not take a cordial view of the Assembly since it over-rides the principle—accepted by all conerned—that Kashmir's future should be settled by a United Nations' plebiscite."

An Anglo-American resolution was passed by the Security Council, which provided for the appointment of a UN representative "...to effect the demilitarization of the state of Jammu and Kashmir" and "to present to the governments of India and Pakistan detailed plans for carrying out a plebiscite in the state..." The Indian representative BN Rau protested : "We are wholly unable to accept any entry of foreign troops into the state or any part cf India. In view of the provisions made by

the resolutions of August 1948 and January 1949, there is no occasion for the use of foreign troops or of special local levies recruited by any outside agency." Sheikh Abdullah commented : "History has taught us that once foreign troops occupy an area under one pretext or another, they come to stay, and in view of the geographic position of Kashmir such a feeling would be justified." Robert Trumbull reported in the *New York Times* : "...The Indian press has seldom, if ever, been so unanimous in its sentiment as it has been in objection to the new Kashmir resolution, and it has rarely used such strong language. Without the slightest doubt the press in this instance reflects the opinion of the government though the latter may use more diplomatic language..."

On March 21, 1951 the Security Council revised the draft. It called upon the UN representative to effect demilitarization on the basis of the UNCIP resolutions of August 13, 1948 and January 5, 1949. This resolution was passed on March 30. The new UN representative appointed was Frank Graham, Adviser to the US President on Defence Man-power in the Department of Labour. Even Gen. Eisenhower's appointment was considered for the post, but he was the presidential candidate of the Republican Party that year. Frank Graham was provided with the assistance of Gen. Jacob Dever, a former Chief of the U.S. Army Field Forces, to work as his military adviser, and had a staff of twelve officers. Now the demand was not for an outright removal of the Kashmir Government, and its replacement by a foreign administration. Now the emphasis was on giving priority to the establishment of Admiral Chester Nimitz in Kashmir, raising the number of UN observers to several thousand and equipping them with heavy weapons.

"The first round of negotiations took place from June to September 1951. Gen. Devers produced an operational plan. He needed 800 armed personnel and 600 others equipped with "the necessary jeeps, helicopters and communication equipment". Later he redrafted it avoiding to mention actual numbers, but vaguely suggested several thousand would be needed.

Pakistan took the position : "The Pakistan government wish

to emphasize the importance of appointing the Plebiscite Administrator formally to office as early as possible.... It is hoped he would be appointed to office as much in advance of the final day of demilitarization as possible". This view was also echoed by Graham: "The main key to the complex problems of the demilitarisation programme...would be the fixing of a definite date for the introduction into office of the Plebiscite Administrator".

Sensing resistance to these proposals from India and the National Conference, the *Washington Post* came out with a modified suggestion on July 19, 1951: "...would it not be possible, given a real desire for agreement, for a small force of troops from both India and Pakistan to be placed under the UN Command to enforce order pending a plebiscite? There should be no difficulty in recruiting a corps of neutral observers to supervise the plebiscite itself".

Vigilant as always, the Soviet representative at the UN, M. Jacob Malik, however, exposed the Anglo-American plan for converting Kashmir into an imperialist trust territory of U.S. and U.K. He observed: "Finally, these plans, as regards Kashmir, aim to achieve the bringing (in) of American-British troops into the territory of Kashmir, and to convert the latter into an American-British colony, and into a military-strategic strong point... The Security Council has not asked, nor authorized Graham...to ask India and Pakistan...for admission of armed forces of UN members into Kashmir.. Evidently, Mr. Graham received authority direct from Washington, from the Pentagon...

"It follows from this that Mr. Graham as UN representative exceeded his authority, and following the general line of the American-British bloc, did everything in his power to create the ground for bringing (in) US and British armed forces into Kashmir under the guise of United Nations Armed Forces... U.S. and U.K. interference in the internal affairs of Kashmir impedes the solution of the Kashmir question, makes impossible for the Kashmiri people to decide their destiny themselves on the basis of the principle of self-determination provided for by the UN Charter." Here the Anglo-American bloc faced one more set-back. On this *Pakistan Times* commented: "The

Soviet exposure of Anglo-American aims with regard to Kashmir seems to have had a paralysing effect on the gentlemen who had given the world to understand that a final plan was in preparation and would shortly be presented to the Security Council".

As a result of this exposure, all that the French president of the Security Council could do was to adjourn the debate *sine die*. Still Graham would not give up, and made one more attempt to pressurise the two dominions to agree to his plan of demilitarization. A.M. Rosenthall, writing in the *New York Times* gave a glimpse of Graham's nefarious plan : "The Security Council has appointed Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz to the post of Plebiscite Administrator, but he never has been able to begin his job. In his last report... Dr. Graham suggested cautiously that Admiral Nimitz might be brought into the picture during the demilitarization talks..."

In his fourth report Graham wrote : "The heart of the integrated programme for demilitarization and the Plebiscite is the induction into office of the Plebiscite Administrator. This was made a central part of the twelve proposals, original and revised". The Government of India, however, insisted that the Plebiscite Administrator could not function until demilitarization was completed.

On November 6, 1952, the US and the UK jointly sponsored a resolution seeking to make it mandatory for the Indian and Pakistani governments "to enter into immediate negotiations ..." Sir Gladwyn Jebb observed : "...within a matter of months we might hope to see the Plebiscite Administrator formally appointed and established in Kashmir..." He also recalled that the Anglo-US proposal of February 1951 recommended "a neutral force might be used in Kashmir to facilitate demilitarization in case either side had any doubts about a renewal of conflict".

M. Zorin (U.S.S.R.) commenting on Graham's fourth report, drew attention to the visit of Admiral Redford to Karachi on November 12, 1952, where he aired his view : "Pakistan occupies a strategic position and is bound to play an important role in the world-wide struggle against Communisn". He also quoted the view of the Karachi newspaper *Dawn* on Redford's

visit : "American military plans in this area consist in setting up of air bases in Pakistan territory within 90 minutes' flying time of major Soviet industrial areas". Zorin remarked that the two quotations indicated the meaning of strategic geography referred to by Graham... "the time-often shelved proposal...(of bringing in foreign troops into Kashmir)...concerning the U.N. troops is presented in the form of an operational and administrative control by the UN through neutral or local officers over a part of the Azad Kashmir troops so as to (in Graham's idea) remove them from the authority of the Pakistani High Command". With all this the resolution was passed in the face of opposition from India. The *New York Times*, reporting later, observed : "Dr. Frank Graham, acting as mediator on behalf of the United Nations, has suggested raising the the discussion of the Indo-Pakistan impasse from the delegate to the cabinet level. At just this time Prime Minister Nehru declared in the Indian Parliament : 'Kashmir's accession is complete in law and in fact : it is part of India'. This is hardly the way to prepare the ground for the plebiscite that Prime Minister Nehru himself suggested".

Graham would not give up. He presented his fifth report on March 31, 1953. He reported : "It is timely that with all our necessary concern over the issue of the number and the character of the forces, we re-orient this concern in the framework of the larger meaning of the induction into office of the Plebiscite Administrator.... The difference over definite numbers...looms less large than the difference between inducting and not inducting the Plebiscite Administrator into office. The transformation in the situation which comes from the simple fact of his induction into office is most important for the great objective of the self-determination of the people of the state under the agreements between the governments.

18. Changing Background

The real significance of the so-called Kashmir question cannot be understood merely by following the proceedings in the Security Council. Much less can one hope to comprehend the true significance of the variations in the nuances of the speeches, reports and resolutions that were recorded year after year by this august body, unless one has a steady eye fixed on the aggressive plans of imperialism in the region around Kashmir, and the global environment in which these had to operate.

Within three years of the reference made by India against the armed aggression from Pakistan, a major strategic shift took place in the world as a whole, and more so in this region involved in a conflict. The Soviet Union managed to overcome the consequences of its colossal war damage in a period so short that no one, friend or foe, had imagined it even as a possibility. It also succeeded in breaking the U.S. monopoly of the atomic bomb. The American stooge, Chiang Kai Shekh was forced to run away from the mainland of China to Taiwan, his multi-million army, heavily armed by U.S.A., having been put to rout. The Peoples' Democratic Republic of China was proclaimed on Ist of October, 1949, and soon after it signed a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union. A colossal programme of land reform, democratic renewal and industrialization was taken up and continued with the help of the Soviet Union. Impressive successes were achieved at least for the next seven years over the vast expanses of the Chinese mainland, including Sinkiang. Stagnation and backwardness appeared to be visibly melting away over a huge land mass of Asia. Such

major developments could not but force world imperialism, particularly the U.S.A., to readjust its strategies. Before these developments, the standing that the new Indian dominion had in the eyes of imperialism, was perhaps best summed up by the prestigious British journalist, Gunther Stein, in May 1948: "To put it bluntly, India is not considered to belong to the category of countries of major military-political importance to the U.S.A. which at present, and now perhaps for a long time to come, have first priority for American deliveries of goods, for American investment of capital, and for assistance with technical and educational American knowhow".

This explains why no American aid was made available to India until August 1949, just about a month before the Peoples' Democratic Republic of China was proclaimed at Beijing. It is well-known that the high expectations of the authors of the Tata-Birla plan before independence were belied when all the resources they had hoped to attract were preferentially diverted to occupied Japan and not to India. On their own rating they had expected to be built up as a counter-poise to Japan. What happened was quite the reverse.

With the proclamation of the Peoples' Republic of China, the Rockfeller Foundation of the U.S.A. were forced to move their Far Eastern headquarters from Shanghai to Bangalore in 1949. Assessment of the new situation was made by the think-tanks of the Rockefeller as well as the Ford Foundation. Both came to the conclusion that India was the key point in the entire East "with which we must learn to live". Paul Hoffman of the Ford Foundation is understood to have written to the South Asian section of the Department of State that a commission, headed by a non-official American of international stature might be sent to India to study the apparent worsening of Indo-American relations, suggest ways of improvement, setting up a planning group in Kashmir to plan economic exploitation of the area, ease Indo-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir and create an international development corporation headed by Nelson Rockefeller for activities in India and Pakistan. Among the other recommendations was strong central governments for the two dominions, and "the hard core of communists be kept under control". Views consistent with this line were expressed

by Chester Bowless when he accepted an ambassador's post in India: "India is the key point in the entire East, and a country which we simply must learn to live with a whole lot more successfully than we are doing at present... If we lose India, as we lost China, and shall certainly lose South-East Asia, with the repercussions running all the way through Africa. It is difficult under such circumstances to see how Japan could be held in line and it would not be too long before we would find ourselves driven back into a citadel".

The British expert Sir William Barton also came out with a similar line: "The Indian sub-continent is the strategic place at which communism in Asia will either be contained or will errupt east, west and south, with consequences almost surely fatal to the peace of the world. Both the American and the British governments are inclined to look to Pandit Nehru to take the leadership in the opposition to communism".

Justice William O. Douglas of the U.S. Supreme Court also travelled extensively in the border areas of Kashmir and Tibet about the same time. He expressed his considered view that: "The key to Asia is now India. *If India is lost, all of Asia is lost.* The smaller nations *would not have the capacity to survive*... America would then *stand alone without allies. It* might then be *too late* to win *even* a war".

The *New York Times* dramatized the situation by its observation: "The struggle for Asia conceivably could be won or lost in the mind of one man—Jawaharlal Nehru. To have Pt. Nehru as an ally in the struggle for Asiatic support is worth many divisions; to have him as an opponent, or even as a critic, would jeopardise the position of western democracy throughout Asia...." Western democracy is a well-known euphemism for imperialism.

Later, the *New York Times* again reported: "For months, as communist armies have swept across China, Washington hopes for a democratic rallying point in Asia have been pinned in India...and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The U.S. is seeking a way to re-assert western influence and thus prevent a further spread of communism in the Far East... Washington is trying to enlist the support of Prime Minister

Nehru, the unofficial spokesman of most of South-east Asia."

Attempts were in fact made to win over Nehru. He was invited to the United States, and accorded a flattering reception. Some 'aid' also started flowing into India. But the cleft foot of imperialism could not be kept hidden from view for too long. As the American aggression in Korea got intensified a new wave of anti-imperialism spread in Asia. The Indian people could not but respond. Even the Pakistan rulers were not prepared to send their army to fight openly side by side with imperialist contingents against the Korean people. The indignation of the people got public expression at the International Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations held at Lucknow. The American overlords were openly bitter : "The attacks of Indian and Pakistan delegates on the U.S. at the International Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations at Lucknow are hard to take at a time when American blood is being spilled and American money taken from all tax-payers to help India preserve her independence and raise her standard of living. Americans are also sorely disappointed with the policies pursued by Prime Minister Nehru concerning Korea.... Pt. Nehru purports to speak for Asia, but it is the voice of abnegation; his criticism turns out to have been obstructive, his policy is appeasement. Worst of all one fails to find valid moral judgement in his attitude. One can feel certain that history will condemn the Nehru policy as well-intentioned but timid, short-sighted and irresponsible ... he is doing wrong to the cause of freedom, of Asian nationalism, of justice and right."

The *Daily Mirror* of New York was sore with "Arabs and Hindus, and folk like that" who dare to oppose American proposals to declare China 'an aggressor', and Indian delegates were "Hindu compradors...of the Soviet Union." In order to find a legal basis for putting an imperialist army in the field under a United Nations flag, for aggression in Korea, the Americans circumvented the big power unanimity principle of the Security Council. Nehru objected to this. He observed : "We did not agree with proposals to create separate armed forces on behalf of the United Nations into a larger

edition of the Atlantic Pact, and make it a war organization, more than one devoted to international peace."

About the same time the U.S. imposed on the Japanese a neo-colonist treaty of peace, providing for perpetual occupation by American troops of a vast area of Japan. All the American surrogates, including Pakistan, signed on the dotted line. But India refused to do so, and negotiated a separate peace treaty with Japan. This was quite a slap in the face of the Americans. The *New York Times* came out with an editorial under the heading "The Lost Leader": "Jawaharlal Nehru is fast becoming one of the greatest disappointments of the post-war era.... To the West he seemed, a few years ago, a logical champion of a free, democratic, anti-communist Asia, and the India he directed was the obvious candidate for the leadership of Asia.... Instead of seizing the leadership of Asia for its good, Nehru turned aside from the responsibilities, proclaimed India's disinterestedness, and tried to set up an "independent" third force suspended in mid-air between the two decisive movements of our day—the communism that Russia heads and the democracy of which the U.S. is the chief champion. So he and India went into limbo. It was an abnegation of greatness and history is not likely to forgive it....The Indian boycott of the Japanese Peace Treaty Conference may bring a tougher U.S. Policy towards her."

Nehru had warned the Americans against the possible consequences of crossing the 38th parallel in Korea in order to invade the North. Wnen they were thrown back ignominiously he gave a call for a truce, and an end to the fighting. This did not suit the imperialist game of involving socialist countries in a long-drawn-out war to bleed them white.

It happened that India was suffering from extreme food shortage about the same time, a consequence of partition, and so requested the U.S. for the sale of two million tons of wheat. The answer was prompt and clear through the press comment: "Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Prime Minister, may have to wait a long time (before) he gets the two million tons of U.S. grain that he wants as a gift. This country's officials are not impressed by India's attitude towards aggression of China in Korea (i.e., coming to the fraternal aid of the Peoples' Democratic

Republic of Korea, when imperialist forces, under the United Nations flag, invaded it, ignoring the warning given by Nehru), or by the degree of co-operation in building defences."

Two days later the Associated Press of America reported : "Officials said that the Indian Prime Minister is being less than helpful with his repeated demands for the admission of New China to the United Nations for a negotiated settlement on Korea, and his outspoken opposition to condemning the Chinese as aggressors."

Senator Tom Connally observed : "Action on the Indian request would be delayed until a sub-committee looks into the whole question of U.S. relations with India." The Indian Emergency Food Aid Act of 1951 was eventually enacted. But the shipments dropped in September 1951 when India refused to accept the American draft of the Japanese Peace Treaty. The shipments were, however, restored to their earlier level only when the Indian government accepted the oil refinery agreement and the Mutual Security Assistance. Very soon, however, the Americans realized that an openly hostile attitude towards India would be counter-productive to imperialist interests. The Republican leader Harold Stassen, however, attacked the State Department for following policies which, he charged, would undermine the Congress party and Pandit Nehru, and turn India to communism. The Republican newspaper magnate, John Cowles, also raised an alarm : "We will be making a blunder, almost as calamitous as the one we made in China, if we don't support the Nehru government in India, even though we may be irritated over (what) we think are inconsistencies in Nehru's attitude.... If the U.S. is so foolish as to undermine Nehru's already weakening regime in India, the government or the chaos that comes after it if in the world's second most populous nation may be far less to our liking."

A similar warning came from Paul Hoffman of Ford Foundation : "India in 1952 stands where China stood in 1946. Surely it is a time to bury the political hatchet and prevent a new catastrophe, which could be even more disastrous." Chester Bowles wrote in the New York Times Magazine : "Certainly China has taught us that any effective effort to strengthen Asian democracy cannot be simply a question of tanks and planes." Evidently, by democracy he means 'capitalism'.

So we find the United States was forced to re-adjust its tactics in dealing with India, and avoid openly appearing to be totally insensitive to the Indian national susceptibilities. The days when the Indian representative Gopalaswamy Ayyanger could be publicly heckled and humiliated in the Security Council were gone. Bluster and threats of the earlier years gave place to deftness, legal camouflage, economic lubricants, cunning and underhand operations. The new American ambassador, Loy Henderson—and his wife—were an appropriate choice with their wide experience of undercover methodology of American Special Agencies. The situation as seen by imperialism was presented by Margaret Parton in the *New York Herlad Tribune* in these words : "As communism solidifies in China and becomes an increasing threat to South-east Asia, India looms large as democracy's foremost bulwark in the East....Potentially she forms Asia's largest military base left to the democracies. Her supply of man-power are vast. She is a source of coal, manganese, iron, mica and some petroleum. She has one of the world's largest steel works."

No sentimental trash about freedom, democracy and human rights here ! The lady knows what western foreign policy is all about.

When the U.S.A. and allied forces under Gen. Mc Arthur crossed the 38th parallel in Korea in 1951, into the territory of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Korea, the *New York Times* reported : "The defence of Asia is...the central and one vital topic for discussion.... Britain would like a strong India and a strong Pakistan to join in resisting the spread of Chinese communist influence throughout Asia.... Britain feels Asian nations should lead the fight against communism in that part of the world."

The *Washington Post* also took up the topic about the same time, and observed : "Pakistan and India are geographically the nearest of the British dominions, and could give powerful help in the Middle East if it were not for the Kashmir issue... For this reason, Washington...suggests that the Kashmir quarrel be taken up at the Commonwealth meeting. In American eyes the key to Middle Eastern defences lies in India and Pakistan..."

The *Business Week* made the further observation : "The solution of the Kashmir problem was thus regarded as a key to Indo-Pakistan co-operation in the defence of the Middle East and South-east Asia. That is why the Commonwealth Ministers made a desperate new effort to solve the dispute." Interesting sidelight was thrown over the whole question by a leading Commonwealth pillar of the time, G.R. Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia :

> "Pakistan is a *British country*. It has ties of *ancient* friendship with the whole British world. Its troops have fought alongside other British troops in two great wars.. . The whole of the Indian sub-continent is being neutralized in great and growing world conflict by the existence of this most unhappy internal dispute.... The capacity of Pakistan to participate in the defence of the Middle East is a problem of major importance...because of the Kashmir dispute, Pakistan is completely neutraliszed".

It is hardly surprising that Pakistan was keen on Commonwealth mediation in the dispute while India declined the offer. The perception of the Kashmir national movement later found its expression in a speech in the Lok Sabha by Maulana Sayed Masoodi, General Secretary of the All Jammu & Kashmir National Conference, when, he said : "The Western powers had cast an 'acquisitive eye' on Kashmir.... Kashmir had thus acquired a very significant importance from the military point of view. The Western powers know that planes based on the soil of Kashmir could be used for bombing any area in Asia."

About the end of 1950 *Reuter* reported from Flushing Meadows : "...There is some speculation now whether the entry into neighbouring Tibet of communist forces...may cause the Kashmir question to be treated in a new light...the feeling persists that a new factor has appeared in the background, and may cast its shadow on Kashmir at some future date." About the same time the *United Press of America* reported from Washington about a conference on Kashmir held between the Secretary of State (Eastern Affairs), George McGhee, and the Pakistan Foreign Minister Sir Mohammad Zafrullah : "The American official made no special suggesstions but merely pointed out U.S. interest in seeing out (sic) stability in that strategic area, which lies only a few miles from communist

invaded Tibet and near Nepal, where the Nepalese are trying to overthrow the present regime."

A few months later the same agency reported : "Kashmir has always been a serious worry to the United Nations as well as the western nations...the question grew in importance in recent months, when the unity of Asia before the communist threat became one of the foremost considerations in the minds of the western policy makers..."

Senator Claude Pepper sounded more threatening in his cryptic remark :" if the two countries failed to settle the issue amicably the United Nations will have to 'wrestle'...with it in the right proper way."

All that has been said in this chapter makes the activities of mediators like Sir Owen Dixon and Mr. Frank Graham more easily comprehensible, and particulary their great anxiety to bring in the Plebiscite Administrator Admiral Nimitz into place in Kashmir anyhow and at the earliest opportunity. It is the rich store of experience that the Indian people have accumulated of fighting imperialism, together with the gratuitous support always given by the Socialist countries, which has enabled the Indian government to resist the persistent imperialist onslaught on this issue. Were it not for the veto that the Soviet Union was forced to use in 1957, India would never have ceased to be in the dock for having resisted all imperialist intrigues for achieving direct military control over the strategic area bordering the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, China, Tibet and Pakistan.

19. The USA Loses A Gamble

Looking back in retrospect over the past four decades there is no doubt about the conclusion that the Kashmir adventure has so far been one of the colossal failures of Anglo-American imperialism of the post-Second World War period. They failed to include it in Pakistan as the most convenient way of dominating a strategic area. They failed to control it as an 'independent' entity through some U.N.O. mechanism, so as to use it as a tool for influencing the development of the Indian Republic to the advantage of imperialism. The Simla Conference of 1972 signified a resounding defeat for imperialism in a vital area. More than this, what happened was that the Indian people got first-hand experience of the more recent neo-colonial methods of imperialism. All their illusions about American democracy and fair play were nearly cast off. The value of the policy of non-alignment and friendship with the Soviet Union was realized with greater intensity and conviction. It is perhaps useful to remind oneself here that the illusions about the U.S. being a non-imperialist power were very real and persistent in the forties among the intelligentsia in India. Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who was India's ambassador in the U.S. in the early fifties, regarded the aggressive trends in American policy, as the outcome of "the mercurial temperament" of the American people. Despite Nehru's declarations in January, 1954 that American military aid brought colonial domination in Asia, the Kalyani session of the Indian National Congress prefaced its resolution on the 'Pakistan-U.S. Pact' with the statement : "The United States of America has a long record as a champion of freedom and democracy". They had evi

dently not heard of genocide of Red Indians, or the gangster rule inflicted on the Latin American countries. The Kashmir question provided an opportunity to the Indian people to understand some of the subtleties of modern American imperialist techniques.

There was, however, one sphere in which imperialism did score a success, and quickly enough. This was in causing political disruption in the state, and breaking the unity and morale of the movement, which had resisted not only the autocracy, but also the armed tribal invasion from Pakistan under British auspices. It has already been mentioned that an anti-communist campaign was carried out in the national militia even before the tribal raiders had left the Valley i.e., in less than three weeks after the Indian army entered the state. A few months later in March 1948, when the Home Ministry at Delhi insisted upon the Maharaja exercising his supreme prerogative of appointing the Prime Minister and approving his cabinet, the people in the Valley were completely taken aback and felt cheated by their own leaders. The leaders also just tried to muddle through rather than take the people into confidence. Thereby they inflicted damage on their own credibility. The Home Ministry's insistence on administration through the existing bureaucratic structure of the autocracy, made matters still worse. The administration lost its sensitivity to the psyche of the resurgent people. The unprecedented upsurge that had seen people armed with sticks and axes holding the invaders at bay in October 1947 flagged and then faded.

The Home Ministry experts lacked the perception to notice this phenomenon. Once the Indian army was in place, they forgot all about the people's movement. In fact they looked upon it as at best a nuisance, and at worst as dangerous subversion. This attitude of the Home Ministry gave heart to local reaction. Mention has already been made of the pro-Pakistan elements in the National Militia who became the spearhead of a communist-baiting campaign. A couple of years later they were sentenced by courts as enemy spies (State Vs. Aladad Khan *et al*). Hindu and Muslim officers of the Maharaja's administration also started having closed-

door meetings in this new atmosphere. Paid informers started to be recruited in large numbers. All the weak, docile, ambitious or politically confused cadres of the National Conference were sucked in, and reduced to informers rather than political activists. Anti-communist hysteria was deliberately fostered. The victories of communist forces on the Chinese mainland facilitated this. Later, many of the Koumintang officers (Delail Khan, Isa Yusuf Effendi etc.) made their escape through Kashmir. Paranoic fear of communists was encouraged. A list of about 2000 "undesirables" was drawn up as 'subversives', forgetting all about those with pro-Pakistan orientation. All National Conference cadres, who could not be tempted to seek economic advantages became suspect. A weekly news-paper *Noor*, run by an old political worker, was suppressed, and the editor arrested. All this was done, no doubt by the state authorities. But they were doing this mainly to curry favour with the Central Home Ministry at Delhi. But Sheikh Saheb did not show the same alacrity to anticipate the desires of the Home Ministry. Therby he incurred a distaste from the ministry which continued to grow.

It is interesting to notice that even in 1950 summer, when the American ambassador Loy Henderson had far advanced in his subversive activities in Kashmir, the Home Minister wrote to Nehru: "I am getting rather worried about Kashmir...Sheikh Sahib's failure to deal with communist infiltration in the state..." Even Dr. Karan Singh has noted in his autobiography : "No one would deny that the great and very powerful Sardar was not in love with Sheikh Abdullah and did not trust him at all."

It is true that Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was not himself very receptive to the Home Ministry's world view. In fact he himself felt let down when the Home Ministry took up the lost cause of Maharaja Hari Singh, and encouraged his intransigence. But when Sheikh Saheb returned from his first visit to Lake Success early in 1949 he was already shaken by the supine and ingratiating attitude of the Indian representative in the Security Council in the face of the shameless, hectoring and intimidating tone of the Anglo-American bloc members in the Council debates. He, himself found it, sometimes, difficult to swallow it, as when he rebuffed Phillip Noel Baker in his forthright vein : "I told him that Great Britain was to be held responsible for

the division of India and all the problems that have arisen as a consequence, including the Kashmir dispute. I also said, whenever Britain is defeated, while withdrawing it always seeks to hold its position through division, and sows the seeds of never-ending disputes. This is what she did in Palestine, and in the Arab world as a whole. It has always stuck to this methodology. It has used the same disruptive tactics in India also...."

With all this he did come to the conclusion that the U.N. Organization was dominated by the USA, and so had an in-built anti-communist bias ; that Kashmir's fate depended upon the UNO, and hence virtually on the goodwill of the USA. The weak-kneed attitude of the Indian representative revived in him the deep fear of finding himself in the situation of Badshah Khan and the Redshirts after the partition of India. He did not hide his views over the treatment of the NWFP at the time of partition. He expressed his own views about it in a D.O. letter to Sardar Patel, partially reproduced in the present work. This led him to adopt anti-communism as a tactic to neutralize the USA, and mollify the Home Ministry, which had never been very happy with him. However, he did not shift his position on accession to India. On January 9, 1949, at Benares, he said : "The Kashmiris had the firm conviction that their future lay with India. How could Kashmir leave India, when every man and woman in India had sacrificed so much for Kashmir, not to speak of the Indian Army, who shed their blood for the emancipation of Kashmir."

In his report to the National Conference in April 1949, Sheikh Saheb observed :

> "The strange attitude shown by the imperialist powers has convinced me that nothing can come out of our talks with the members of the Security Council, and I have accordingly asked Mr. Ayyanger to withdraw the case altogether. Mr. Noel Baker flatly denied the complicity of Pakistan in the raids, which, he said, were of a local nature. Mr. Warren Austin, the American delegate, insisted on a 'neutral administration' for Kashmir, which he frankly said would include a few members of the Security Council.

> Most of the members see Kashmir only as a neighbour of Russia and therefore an essential base in the encirclement of Russia for future aggression."

On his return from Lake Success, early in 1949, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah called for a private meeting of five members of the communist group in the National Conference organisation. He showered all praise on them, for their sacrifices to the cause of the Kashmiri people. He praised them for their honesty, selflessness, staunchness and loyalty. He was only not happy about their public denunciation of Anglo-American imperialism, and its role in the world arena including Kashmir. He did not try to find fault with their thinking. But as a practical politician he could not ignore what importance was attached to such utterances in "far-off countries." He wanted the business of fighting Anglo-American manoeuvres to be left to him. He wanted to be trusted "as Stalin is trusted." He assured them that he had neither the wish nor saw any need to suppress the communists in the state. But he was helpless. Powerful people in "far-off lands" had irrational fears, and he could not ignore their susceptibilities because they wielded the power to harm him and his cause. He was under pressure to throw known communists out of the organisation. He wanted them to make a public exit from the organization, or to disavow any connection with Marxist ideology. He made a gratuitous promise of having no intention of indulging in communist baiting "as they do these days in centrally administered areas."

Anti-communism was not unknown in the National Conference even before independence. During the 1942-44 period it was cultivated with great effort among the students. Some National Conference leaders invited Prof. Ranga to indulge in anti-communist mud-slinging and cooperated with the splinter group of M.L. Shah and Ansar Harvani in the All India Student's Federation. The INA agitation was also sought to be used against them. During the upsurge of 1946 the leadership insisted that the communist group dissolve their own organization, and individually place themselves under the discipline of the 'war council' set up for leading the agitation. This situation was utilized to get them involved in purely adventurist and

provocative acts of incendiarism. When they saw through these tricks and took principled objection to the whole approach, they were ordered to surrender to the authorities through *satyagraha*. However, when the armed intervention from Pakistan was launched in October, 1947 they were the only group who kept their cool, and could think of the next step whenever faced with a difficult and unforeseen situation. In fact, as late as June 1948, Sheikh Saheb himself summed up his attitude in one sentence : "I am really grateful to you all for the help your party has given me in the recent task, but now the army has been provided by Sardar Patel. This makes quite a difference."

At this stage, however, Sheikh Saheb's anti-communism appeared to have been an expression of pragmatism rather than bitter class hatred. It is notable that in the Jammu province, where the Palace and the R.S.S. ruled the roost Sheikh Saheb sought communist assistance to counter the communalists. The services of Com. Dhanwantari, one-time colleague of Sardar Bhagat Singh, were sought for and used. His views and assessments carried much weight with the popular Emergency Administration, and helped it to overcome the sabotage of the Palace-R.S.S. nexus—which followed a reactionary line of accentuating communalism that helped the imperialist manoeuvres in the area.

From 1949 onwards, Sheikh Saheb and the dominant sections of the National Conference leadership re-adjusted their public pronouncements also. The world scene was depicted as the struggle between "two power-blocs," two elephants fighting it out among themselves and trampling underfoot small nations. The attitude of Jacob Malik (Representative of the USSR) at the UNO was misreported as complete indifference to the fate of the Kashmiri people. The atmosphere changed to this extent that the Soviet film 'Battle for Berlin' was not allowed to be screened. Only a few months prior to this, documentaries on 'Tadjikistan' and 'Sohay Bator' had been publicly shown to hundreds of appreciative Srinagar citizens.

Disparaging remarks were made even in regard to the Peace Movement, and the signature campaign for the Stockholm appeal against the atomic bomb. This went to the ludicrous

extent of the police stopping a debate in a Srinagar college on "Is War Inevitable ?" All this happened when Mirza Afzal Beg and G.M. Sadiq, top leaders of the National Conference, were also the leaders of the Peace Movement. In this surcharged atmosphere a small bookshop in Bulbul Lankar, selling progressive literature, was looted by hooligans. Some of the workers of the National Conference, with good reputations and popularity, were arbitrarily excluded from their positions in the organization, or even from their primary membership.

Meanwhile the economic crisis, particularly the shortage of common salt in the state got intensified. Pakistan had withheld most of the motor vehicles of the state along with supplies even before the armed invasion started. Rawalpindi, and to some extent Havelian, near Abbotabad, were the railheads for the trade in the Valley before partition. They were now in the Pakistan Dominion. The Jhelum river also flows down to Pakistan. It used to carry most of our timber for export. The rest used to be carried by the Chenab, which also flows into Pakistan. Common salt came from mines which also were in Pakistan. The nearest available railhead was Pathankote, a hundred kilometres from Jammu, but without a proper metalled road connecting it with Jammu town, which in turn was separated from Srinagar at that time by about 350 kilometres of a badly laid hill-road, not available for use practically for half the year. Even the air-port in Srinagar was not in a very satisfactory condition. The export of fruit, handicrafts and timber from Kashmir came to a standstill. With all the honest, dependable, motivated cadres put out of the way as a matter of high policy it did not take long for corruption to become rampant. An atmosphere was created in which the incorruptible became synonymous with the 'subversive'. This, more than anything that Pakistan did, or could do, destroyed the movement at its roots.

In this new atmosphere very soon the suppression of the working people started gaining legitimacy. This was a totally new phenomenon in the state. The administration used brute force against the working people, who had been the main source of strength and sustenance to the movement for so-

long. Vegetable gardeners of Srinagar were subjected to brutal suppression by the police, and several hundred were framed under false criminal cases. Similar treatment was given to weavers and other sections of the workers. At the same time their leaders were invariably sought to be brow-beaten and later purchased into submission. As if this was not enough, a serious food crisis overtook the Valley and the hilly regions. It is not certain whether there was a heavy deficit in production, or whether, as was frequently rumoured, sizable quantities were being smuggled across the frontier with the connivance of the border guards. Srinagar itself had known a guaranteed rationing system since 1922, the like of which was unknown probably in the whole country. The old system of requisitioning stocks from the peasantry, at a price fixed by the government in advance, broke down. The Central Government also were not able to help the state on a sufficiently large scale. So the requisition from the peasantry started under coercion. In an atmosphere of witch-hunt the high-handedness of the bureaucracy got the upper hand. Procurement of grain in the villages degenerated into cruel extortion, the grower being robbed of his own food, while the speculator-cum-political-manipulator, in league with the bureaucrat, thrived. Along with grain shortage there was shortage of every kind : kerosene, salt, cloth, sugar, soap etc. Corruption and nepotism spread everywhere, so much so that for a while, the people under stress pined for "the good old days". Paralysis of transport affected tourism as well as trade in fruit and handicrafts. There was no control over the flight of capital. The Government Emporium, initially started to provide credit and marketting facilities to poor and illiterate handicraftsmen in the Valley, suddenly took the shape of a ruthless monopoly trader, cynical in its attitude to the very handicraftsmen for whose benefit the organization was supposed to have been created. The old type, poor hawker, roaming through the streets of the big towns in the sub-continent, found himself denounced and discredited by the new organization. Transport of goods to and from the Valley also became a monopoly controlled by a few, wielding great state power. Army contracts also were channelled through the select

few, leaving out in the cold all those traditionally in such business. A black market thrived in all essential commodities. The misery of the people was so acute that it found powerful expression in satire and verse of many a talented poet and artist.

Normally the anti-feudal movement in the Valley was a potent influence in nurturing a democratic movement in the Jammu province also. It had been, over a period, slowly eroding the influence of the big landlords, aristocrats, speculators and moneylenders, even in the Jammu region. This influence was sure to get greatly accelerated under the Emergency Administration. But the anti-communist phobia of the home ministry, and its generally reactionary attitude put a brake on this process and strengthened communal forces. Even Pandit Nehru was forced to complain to Sardar Patel that the Praja Parishad campaign against 'Kashmiri domination' was helping the enemy propaganda, that these activities were being financed by the Palace, and that the Maharaja's brother-in-law had launched a crusade against the state (Emergency) government. These nefarious activities were carried to the extent of reportedly securing the release of Ghulam Abbas and Choudhri Hamid Ullah, two top Muslim Conference leaders, through the influence of the Durbar, and their crossing the border to Pakistan.

All these factors, particulary the anti-communist witch-hunt and the reactionary pro-feudal stance of the Home Ministry killed the democratic core of the whole National Conference movement. The communists were also handicapped by the sectarian positions of the Second Party Congress of the C.P.I. at Calcutta. Besides adopting the concept of the fusion of the two stages, of the national democratic and the socialist revolution, this congress equated Congress and League leaderships as callaborators of imperialism, and equally responsible for partition. It disarmed all those resisting Pakistani manoeuvres. In the context of Kashmir it was interpreted as implying communist disinterest in the whole question of accession. It naturally resulted in relative insensitivity to the manoeuvres and tactics of imperialism in the whole area, which were very well camouflaged by putting ostensibly the question of the

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dispute over accession into the forefront, and sustain an atmosphere of bitter communal strife. The Central Committee of the C.P.I., however, clarified its position later through the statement : "The question of accession must be decided by the democratic verdict of the *whole Kashmir people*....the de-facto partitioning be brought to an end by mutual agreement between India and Pakistan, and...a Constituent Assembly be convened representing the *entire* people of the state....The issue must be removed from the U.N.O. and decided by the Indian Union and Pakistan by both agreeing to abide by the democratic verdict of the whole Kashmiri people themselves ... It is essential that the 'de-facto' military partitioning of Kashmir is brought to an end by mutual agreement between India and Pakistan...and the Constituent Assembly representing the entire people of the state." Clearly, the implementation of such a policy needed a strong and mature party with a mass base in the whole sub-continent. The Mountbatten Award itself had worked havoc with the left movement in the sub-continent. Political demoralization in the Valley reached its highest pitch on January 1st, 1949 when a ceasefire, almost out of the blue, came into operation. It was commonly interpreted as a legitimization of the occupation of more than one-fourth of the territory of the state by the invaders, and a preparation for the undermining of the popular regime in the rest of the state. The Indian Army was already poised, just at that time, to retake Mirpur, Kotli and Muzaffarabad towns within a week or two. Pakistani resistance was already weakening in all sectors. The ceasefire was understood by the knowledgeable as a manifestation of Indian helplessness in the face of the Anglo-American bloc. which was known to prefer Pakistan occupation of at least those areas in the north and west already held by them. In the Valley itself an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty spread, and many who had long-standing connection with the National Movement looked for pretexts for distancing themselves from the organization and its programmes. Many started hobnobbing even with communists to gain credit for impartiality as between the two contending parties.

The atmosphere of profound concern that hovered over the Valley found its expression in a poem of the poet Dina Nath

'Nadim', *I will not sing Today,* which as a piece of inspired poetry has its own place as a landmark in Kashmiri literature. Demoralisation generated apathy and cynicism, which in turn started gnawing at the roots of the whole people's movement. Even the leaders wielding power started fraternizing with and appeasing Muslim League adherents just in case the fortunes got reversed. Soon enough, the Praja Parishad, a front organisation of the R.S.S. in Jammu and enjoying Palace patronage, got activised with a renewed force. Through some unknown mechanism conditions were created to provoke the inoffensive Buddhists of Ladakh into creating a Jammu-type situation. Since these people were hard to provoke, for the first time in their over-a-century of history as constituents of the state, Kashmir police personnel were sent from the Valley to provide adequate provocation. As if this was not enough all the real or supposed sins of the Chinese communists in Sinkiang were also thrown in their face to silence and intimidate them, as if to force them to think in terms of secession from the J & K State. Within a year they were made to learn all the modish 'historical' lessons of the irreconcilability of Islam and Buddhism although this notion could imply the breakup of many of their families. A few years later, Kushak Bakula, head lama of Ladakh, speaking as a member of the Legislative Assembly, complained that "Ladakh had been treated like a conquered territory, not a pie was spent on the rehabilitation of the victims of the Pakistani raiders in 1947; even the Prime Minister's donation was withheld and essential commodities became scarce".

The events in Jammu and Ladakh got a new significance when it was revealed that Seikh Saheb had given an interview to Michael Davidson of the *Observer* and *Scotsman* (London), and also to Ward Price of the *Daily Mail* (London). He was quoted as having said:

"If the Punjabis of the Poonch area or Pathans of Gilgit wanted to choose Pakistan let them do so...but for Kashmir whose whole economy depends on free access for visitors from the entire sub-continent and a free flow into rich markets of the world for Kashmir luxury goods, perhaps some form of neutrality between the Dominions was the only solution

....Accession to either side cannot bring peace..., We want to live in friendship with both dominions. Perhaps a middle path between them, and economic co-operation with each, will be the only way of doing it. But an independent Kashmir must be guaranteed not only by India and Pakistan but also by Britian, the U.S., and other members of the United Nations.... Yes, independence guaranteed by the United Nations—may be the only solution".

While Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was abroad the second time to attend the U.N., a debate was on inside the National Conference organization, generally in whispers or in closed-door meetings, regarding the available "third way". Partisans of this new alternative, generally close to Sheikh Saheb personally, used to offer frequently as one serious justification for this course, the obstructionist attitude of the Government of India to radical land reforms and the abolition of hereditary monarchy in the state. This made it difficult, it was asserted, for the National Conference to retain its mass base in the Valley in the face of torrents of unscrupulous propaganada from Pakistan. The "third way" provided a convenient way out of the dilemma. It had also the merit of saving the adherents of the National Conference from the inevitable reprisals of pro-Pakistanis, should they somehow secure their dominance over Kashmir affairs.

These arguments were generally rebutted by others associated with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, Moulana Syed Masoodi, G.M. Sadiq and D.P. Dhar. In order to emphasise that no one was in the way of Sheikh Saheb going in for radical land reforms, they took the initiative early in 1950 to set up a Training Centre for National Conference Workers to discuss all the aspects of land reform and its implementation on the ground level. Five hundred workers from all parts of the Valley were to be engaged in small batches for discussions under the auspices of the training school. The funds needed were provided by D.P. Dhar, supposedly a donation from some friends. Lectures and discussions started with the first batch without much ado.

The Centre had hardly started functioning when it produced consternation in Sheikh Saheb's camp. Alarmist cables were rushed to Lake Success. Reportedly, Sheikh Saheb was warned

that a sinister conspiracy was on to displace him from his leadership. Sheikh Saheb also did not appear to take the alarmist messages too lightly. He did return earlier than had been expected. Soon after his return he called a meeting of important workers of the organisation at Mujahid Manzil, the party centre in Srinagar. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was also among those present. Sheikh Saheb talked mainly of conspiracies being hatched against him because of his fearlessness, and his uncompromising posture where the interests of the common people were involved. He was being rewarded by stabbing in the back by his own colleagues. Then he raised doubts about the purpose of the Training Centre for workers. He claimed there was no need for long drawn-out discussions. He promised to get a list of the biggest landlords to be speedily drawn up so that, in about two months, on Martyr's Day, i.e, 13th July, 1950 he would announce the confiscation of their estates. The Training Centre was immediately wound up. A list of 30 landlords in the state was drawn up, each of whom owned more than 125 acres (1000 *kanals*). They were to be allowed to retain 22.5 acres (182 *kanals*) of agricultural land excluding orchards. The remaining land was to be taken over by the state without compensation. Wherever tenancy status of the tiller was recorded, it was to be transferred to him at once. Orchard ownership was not affected.

The total agricultural land with these thirty landlords was found to be 82479 acres. Six belonged to Kashmir Valley, two being Muslim shrines. Three other owners were Buddhist *Gompas* of Ladakh. All others were non-Kashmiris, including Muslims. It may be mentioned here that earlier in the year 'A Bill to Provide Relief to Distressed Debtors' had been passed. This was followed by a 'Bill to Provide Summary Procedure for the Restitution of Certain Mortgaged Properties in J&K State'.

Out of the 82479 acres sequestered from the 30 biggest landowners, 4800 acres could be resumed by the owners for self cultivation, and the owner was free to make his (her) choice of this piece, out of what belonged to him (her). In all 9000 owners ultimately lost 450,000 acres of land under this legislation, each retaining 22½ acres for self-cultivation. According to Syed Mir Qasim, 220000 acres were tansferred to

tenants, the remaining area was left under government control.

These reforms, except Debt Relief, were implemented through the machinery of the revenue department. The organisation has traditionally been steeped in corruption. No public or unofficial organisation had any say in its implementation, the whole emphasis being on revenue records. The Distressed Debtors' Relief Act, which scaled down old debts of working people very heavily had already produced a credit crisis in the countryside. Food procurement was already a major source of corruption and oppression. So also was the cooperative organisation set up for distribution of essential commodities. In this whole 'Slough of Despond' it was not possible for a big wave of joy to cross the Valley when such far-reaching land reforms were announced. The cynics said that this was merely the preliminary preparation for a plebiscite under UNO auspices. The National Conference organisation announced the reforms with great pomp and ceremony, each district town being visited the same day by a Working Committee member as part of the annual celebrations of Martyrs' Day.

The day was chosen by designfor initiating a fresh, bitter and persistent attack on communists. The daily *Khidmat*, the official organ of the National Conference, carried a long editorial on the 13th of July, 1950. It was entitled "Straws in the Wind" (literally : 'Which Way Does the Wind Blow ?'). The editorial, naturally, highlighted the land reform being announced that day. It assured the people that the reform was only the first step in the direction of the goal of New Kashmir. But the way was now clear and the rest would follow. But one serious obstacle remained to be cleared. The "atheists" had entrenched themselves in the organisation—some leading workers among the peasantry were named. The only motive these atheists had of infiltrating into the organisation was to disrupt and break it. This was an alarming situation. Unless all these elements were rooted out any further advance was impossisble. This was the moral that was rubbed home. It was only the beginning of a campaign that was pursued relentlessly throughout the Valley for well over a year. Every morning a jeep would leave the National Conference headquarters, carrying two middle-level leaders, e.g.,

G.M. Shah, Sheikh Saheb's son-in-law, or Bakshi Rashid, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad's cousin, or some one of that level. They would go to some pre-appointed place in the districts to conduct elections of office bearers to a local National Confercnce committee. Invariably they carried a blacklist of workers regarded as unreliable by the leadership. They were to be excluded from membership or an elected post in the organisation. Frequently they also carried the names of the people to be confirmed on elected posts. Thus a purge was on throughout the Valley for a whole year. Except for a few tens of them, hardly any of those excluded could be regarded as communists in any proper sense of that word. They were no doubt militant workers, invariably with a reputation for honesty. Sometimes there was serious resistance to this purge, particulary in Badgam and Kulgam tehsils. But the purge continued. This is how Sheikh Saheb destroyed the organisation that had been created for well over a decade under his own leadership.

The author of the *Khidmat* editorial of July 13, already referred to, gave a glimpse itno his own thinking when he observed just about that time : "We could easily arrive at a settlement with the Americans but for the communists." Few among the upper leadership circles of the National Conference appeared to have cautioned those at the helm about the suicidal nature of the course they had adopted. Far from softening on this course, the *Khidmat* started a virulent campaign on the peace movement, cultural activities—*Bazm-i-Kung-Posh* and even indoor meetings ("Bathak Meetings"), or any other sign of indepedent intiative. For some time even G.M. Sadiq was kept out of office. He was brought back only when a decision was taken to convene the Constituent Assembly, at the end of 1950. Socially, Loy Henderson and Mrs. Henderson were very much in the picture everywhere. With all this the proceedings in the United Nations did not give the National Conference much cause for satisfaction. They had almost fallen for the Dixon plan of partition and limited plebiscite, confined to the Valley. But when Dixon insisted on supplanting Sheikh Saheb's government with a 'neutral' administration they changed their minds.

The Indian government took the land reform seemingly in its

stride, they were not provoked into any public opposition. If it was calculated to provoke a crisis as alleged by some, it did not succeed in that objective.

A significant development of early 1951 was a distinct change in the attitude of the Western publicity media towards Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah. Dawn Warner reported to the *Daily Telegraph* : "With the passage of time the achievements of Sheikh Abdullah's self-appointed Provisional Government, and the effects of these achievements on the people of Kashmir are factors which cannot be ignored or undone. In three and a half years his regime has freed the country from the despotic rule of the Maharaja, and won over thousands of peasants by land reform." This must be a singular instance of a Western Conservative journal applauding confiscation of land from landlords without compensation.

A similar report from Harold Milks appeared in the *Washington Post* : "Ask any rural citizen of Kashmir whether he favours accession to India or Pakistan, and he very likely will answer : 'I favour Sheikh Saheb'.... Sheikh Saheb is variously described as a dominating, ruthless politician, and a benevolent national leader. Whichever he is, he has the Kashmir country folk behind him."

The special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote from Srinagar : "The visitor cannot fail to notice Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah's hold on the people, even on those who want to accede to Pakistan. The Sheikh's hold is not new ; he has been known in his country for the past twenty years as the champion of the poor, and for his persistent fight against autocratic rule, a fight which took him to jail eight times. His integrity is never questioned. The police force is sparse and people freely criticize the government. The Sheikh himself freely mixes with the crowd."

The *New York Times* of February 3, 1952, published Sheikh Saheb's photograph with the caption "Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, who seized the Kashmir government, presides over the distribution of land to the peasants, a reform which made him popular with all but the landlords."

Even Frank Graham showed a change in his attitude to Sheikh Saheb's government. This was duly reciprocated.

Demonstrations against him started to be harshly dealt with. Sheikh Saheb received publicly the Kazakh refugees from Sinkiang and the emigre Kuomintang army officers escaping from China, with great ceremony and a distinctly anti-communist slant. Dr. Edmunds of C.M.S., a permanent fixture at Srinagar for several decades, wrote to *The Times* "The Kazaks were being housed and fed at a reasonable standard by the generous help of American friends and through the co-operation of the government of Sheikh Abdullah."

The Government of India was, no doubt, aware of these developments. Early in 1951, Nehru sent Krishna Menon to talk things over with Sheikh Saheb. He did not cut much ice with him. Then he came himself, ostensibly for a brief holiday in Sonamarg. A close-door meeting of trusted workers was called, attended by Nehru and Sheikh Saheb. Jawaharlal Nehru delivered a professorial lecture on independence of nations in our times. He took pains to explain that in our times only the USA and the USSR are the two nations that can be regarded as truly independent. All other nations are dependent in one way or the other. He named countries in south and central America, and also in the Middle East as those which are independent only on paper. He left the matter at that, without taking up the question of Kashmir. He was followed by Sheikh Saheb. Sheikh Saheb talked of communal riots that had taken place earlier in Bengal. He said these were a cause of great concern to people who had been told that no such riots could take place in a free India. He appreciated the fact that Nehru had taken strong measures to control them. Muslims, he said, had confidence only in two Indians—two "stars". One of these had already sunk. Now, god forbid, if the other one also is found missing, who is it they can rely upon for their safety ? Muslims had got very much upset by the frequent communal riots, and therefore felt insecure all over the country. Sheikh Saheb made no reference to what Nehru had said. The meeting ended at that stage rather inconclusively. Later, it was said that Nehru also sent a note in writing in which he asserted that neither India nor Pakistan could permit an "independent" Kashmir on its borders. It would have menacing implications for the safety of both. As for himself, he was

prepared to offer Kashmir on a silver platter to Pakistan rather than have a perpetual centre of pressure and international intrigue fixed on its border.

The newly elected Constituent Assembly was convened on November 5, 1951 for its inaugural session. In his inaugural speech Sheikh Saheb said :

"You are the sovereign authority in this state of Jammu and Kashmir. What you decide has the irrevocable force of law....One great task before the Assembly will be to devise a constitution for the future governance of the country. Another issue of vital importance to the nation involves the future of the Royal Dynasty....The third major issue awaiting your deliberations arises out of Land Reforms, which the government carried out with vigour and determination. Finally this Assembly will, after full consideration of the alternatives that I shall state later, declare its reasoned conclusions regarding accession...If we accede to India there is no danger of a revival of feudalism and autocracy.. .During the last four years the Government of India has never tried to interfere in our internal autonomy. This experience has strengthened our confidence in them as a democreatic set up.... Any unnatural cleavage found between religious groups is the legacy of imperialism and no modern state...can afford to encourage artificial division if it is to achieve progress and prosperity. The Indian Constitution has amply and finally repudiated the concept of a religious state, which is a throw-back to medievalism".... About accession to Pakistan Sheikh Abdullah observed : ".... The claim of (Pakistan) being a Muslim state is only a camouflage...to dupe the common man so that he may not see clearly that Pakistan is a feudal state in which a clique is trying by these methods to maintain itself in power...appeal to religion constitutes a sentimental and a wrong approach....Sentiment...often leads to irrational action...

"We have been able to...carry out these (land) reforms (through).. .Are we sure that in landlord-ridden Pakistan, with so many feudal privileges intact, this economic reform of ours will be tolerated ? Our economy is bound up with

our arts and crafts. The traditional markets for these precious goods, for which we are justly known all over the world, have been centred in India..."

In this very speech Sheikh Saheb did mention the "third" course available to Kashmir : "The third course open to us has still to be discussed. We have to consider the alternative of making ourselves an Eastern Switzerland, of keeping aloof from both sides, but havidg friendly relations with them. This might seem attractive in that it would appear to pave the way out of the present deadlock. To us as tourist country it could also have certain obvious advantages". He however, pointed out that it would be difficult to protect it unless "we find powerful guarantors among the neighbouring countries."

Michael James reported to the *New York Times*: "Hints have been made that once the Constituent Assembly begins to function, there is a possibility of creating an opposition to accession to India and the creation of what will be a popular independence movement."

Sheikh Saheb again spoke on March 23, 1952 :

"Suppose for the sake of argument that the people do not ratify this accession. The position that would follow will not be that as a matter of course Kashmir becomes a part of Pakistan. No, that would not happen legally and constitutionally. What would happen in such an eventuality would be that the state would regain the status which it enjoyed immediately preceding the accession. Let us be clear about it."

In January 1952, Sheikh Abdullha went to Paris and met many Western statesmen. After his return to Bombay, he remarked : "Those who say it is time to withdraw the Kashmir issue altogether from the U.N.O. are giving vent to emotions and do not grasp the difficult aspects of the question...the attitude of the Security Council was conciliatory.... Every member thought that a solution would be reached by mediation ...all members were serious about finding a solution to the Kashmir problem."

The possibility of an independent Kashmir had been spelled out as early as in February 1948, by Dr. Jose Arce, the Argentine representative on the U.N.C.I.P. He remarked : "The fact

that should be borne in mind is that the Kashmiri people may well decide not to accede either to India or to Pakistan but to remain independent."

In December 1951, the Cambridge don, Dr. T.G. Spear, Fellow of Selwyn College, was quite specific. Speaking to the Cambridge branch of the U.N. Association on December 3, 1951, he observed : "Turn the Vale into an independent state, an Asiatic Switzerland...'independence' should be guaranteed by the U.N.O. and separately by India and Pakistan...a force of U.N. troops to deal with any sudden surprise...free trade with both India and Pakistan ..U.N. control of all canals and head waters."

Michael James reported in the *New York Time* on February 3, 1952 : "...And then, of course, there is the dream : have the U.N. to police the state for a few years of independence from both India and Pakistan. The Azad Kashmir without guns would be a part of the scheme : an independent nation with close economics ties with both India and Pakistan; a peaceful nation that would attract hesitant foreign capital for the development of its economic natural resources—a real Switzerland of the East."

On 7th June the Constituent Assembly also adopted a resolution on the State Flag : "Resolved that the National Flag of J & K. state shall be rectangular in shape and red in colour, with three equidistant vertical stripes of equal width next to the staff and a white plough in the middle with its handle facing the strips. The ratio of the width to the length of the flag shall be 2 : 3." The word 'National' was, however, deleted subsequently by an amendment.

In April 1952, Sheikh Abdullah, after a brief visit to Paris, delivered a virulent speech at Ranbir Singh Pora in Jammu, denouncing communalism in India. The speech was the culmination of a series of speeches delivered by him as well as Mirza Afzal Beg in the Jammu province, the centre of Hindu communalist activities. Sheikh Saheb was reported to have said that the application of the Indian Constitution to Kashmir was "unrealistic, childish and savouring of lunacy." He drew attention to the recurrence of communal riots in India and said that after Pandit Nehru, the Muslims would have no one

to look up to. He was called to Delhi for discussions. This resulted in the Delhi Agreement with the Central Government, signed on July 24, 1952. Speaking about this agreement in the Constituent Assembly, Sheikh Saheb said :

"It is obvious that while our constitution is being framed the fundamental rights and duties of a citizen have necessarily got to be defined, It was, however, agreed that the Fundamental Rights contained in the Constitution of India could not be conferred on the residents of J & K in their entirety, taking into account the economic, social and political character of our movement as enunciated in the New Kashmir Plan..."Particular care should have to be taken by this House on the question of land compensation, as well as the transfer of land to the tiller and other matters..."

Syed Mir Qasim, reporting about this agreement later observed : "Whereas the Delhi Agreement recognizes our right to abolish monarchy in the state and to have a separate flag, we accepted the jurisdiction of the powers of the President of India, and the application of the Indian Citizenship Rights to the people of J & K....Whereas the subjects of J & K state will enjoy citizenship rights and the right to settle down and seek employment in any part of India, restrictions on the exercise of such rights for Indians in Kashmir will continue as usual...The Indian President will intervene only at the request of the government chosen by the people....The Central Government will exercise no financial control over the state..."

Speaking to Parliament on this agreement Jawaharlal Nehru remarked :

"..There was general agreement that there should be Fundamental Rights and those rights should apply to the state. But again there were great apprehensions in the minds of our friends from Kashmir. First of all the question was how far the Fundamental Rights might come in the way of their land legislation or any other development of it....The second thing was...all this business of invasion of Kashmir, war, cease-fire, all kinds of continuing tensions, difficulties due to infiltration etc... espionage cases...there is sabotage and the rest. So we are

told that some part of the Fundamental Rights might very well hamper the activities of the state government from taking precautions. We agreed that this was essential in the interests of Kashmir, situated as the state is now..."

Speaking to some journalists after signing the agreement Nehru qu'pped : "Speaking with all deference to the Indian Constitution I should like to change it now. We propose to do it in course of time. But it is a complicated process..." Questioned whether he would like to change it in such a way that other states in India may be able to have land reforms as in Kashmir, Nehru replied : "That is one of the reasons why I should like to change it." Before the Agreement had been signed, the *Times* (London) reported : "If Delhi and Karachi have tended to assume in the past that Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conference Party were pliable instruments dedicated to strengthening the ties between Kashmir and India the time has come to revise this assumption. The Sheikh has made it clear that he is as much opposed to domination by India as to subjugation by Pakistan. He claims sovereign authority for the Kashmir Constituent Assembly, without limitation by the Constitution of the Indian Union....This stand has a strong appeal for Kashmiris on both sides of the cease-fire line, and if this movement of purely Kashmiri nationalism were to gain ground it might well oblige India, Pakistan and the United Nations to modify their views about what ought to be done next."

Similar views were reported by Gordon Graham in the *Christian Science Monitor* : "For all Sheikh Abdullah's friendship for India his first loyalty is to Kashmir. Both he and his people have the strong impression that Kashmir is not a state adrift looking for a nation to which to anchor itself, but is rather Itself a nation in the process of self-discovery. With Soviet Russia and Communist Tibet towering to the north, Sheikh Abdullah sees Kashmir's future as a matter of alignment rather than accession, and of the largest measure of independence compatible with safety. His dream perhaps is that one day Kashmir may be the Switzerland of the East, no only in the physical resemblance which is already so strong, but also in a neutrality guaranteed by all the nations

surrounding it."

The Delhi Agreement pleased neither Pakistan nor the Anglo-American bloc. For them it was a fresh obstacle in their path. They had no interest in the democratic gains of the Kashmiri people within the Indian Union. Predictably, the Praja Parishad was bitterly opposed to the agreement, and launched a campaign against it. They want India to be a Unitary State, and internal democracy is anathema to them.

The *New York Herald Tribune* reported : "Obviously (the Delhi Agreement) will throw a new and serious obstacle in the stubborn efforts of the U.N. to set up conditions in Kashmir which would permit an equitable plebiscite among the people."

Reporting on the Praja Parishad agitation, the *Manchester Guardian* noted : "Clearly Sheikh Abdullah has raised, more or less by accident, some constitutional problems, which may be hard to deal with. Kashmir's accession may be disruptive the India Union rather than strengthen it. Does not this show to again that the only happy solution in Kashmir would be parti-tion ? Partition, with a plebiscite in the Valley is surely the solution by which, in a most complex and unhappy situation, the maximum justice could be done."

Towards the end of November 1952, a joint Anglo-American resolution was brought before the Security Council. This was a signal for the Praja Parishad in Jammu to revie its agitation against the Delhi Agreement. The Jan Sangh sent its big gun Shyama Prasad Mukerjee to raise the tempo of the agitation. While in detention, he suddenly died under mysterious cir-cumstances. Nothing worse could have happened to compli-cate the situation.

The London *Times* reported on January 23, 1953 : "Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, Deputy P.M....said to your correspon-dent that U.N. observers and Anglo-American powers were at the root of the Praja Parishad agitation." Robert Trumbull reported in the *New York Times* : "While the U.N. continues trying without success to settle the dispute between India and Pakistan over the allegiance of the state of J&K, disaffection is erupting into almost daily violence and demonstration against the authorities.... Jammu is physiographically and ethnically related to the North-Indian plain and its people, while the rest

of the state is separated by snowy mountains and is populated by different ethnic groups and religion."

Nehru, speaking about the agitation remarked : "It was a mean and wicked movement, which if allowed to succeed, would only break up the J&K state and do incalculable harm to India's case for Kashmir before the U.N."

Chester Bowles, U.N. ambassador in India, visited Srinagar in 1952. *Izvestia* (Moscow) of February 26, 1953, reported : "The recent visit of the (Ex) American Ambassador in India...to Srinagar also testifies to the endeavour of the American imperialists to become the absolute masters in Kashmir. The Italian paper Avanti...wrote that Bowles stated during talks with representatives of certain reactionary groups in Kashmir that a determination of the Constitution of India is impossible unless U.N, armies are brought into the territory of Kashmir. 'The task of these armed forces', Bowles declared straightaway, 'consists in ensuring in the future a stable internal situation for the *indepenedent* state of Kashmir, a stability which will naturally be closely bound up with the political, diplomatic and military interests of the Americans in Central and South Asia."

In November, 1952, Eisenhower was elccted President of the USA, with John Foster Dulles as his Secretary of State. A period of aggressive foreign policy marked this change. Soon after this Dulles, Harold Stassen and Adlai Stevenson planned their visits to India. Early in May, 1953, Adlai Stevenson came to Srinagar and met Sheikh Abdullah on 1st, 2nd and 3rd May, the last meeting stretching for seven hours. The *Manchester Guardian* reported : "On his world tour Mr. Stevenson visited Kashmir, and seemed to have listened to suggestions that the best status for Kashmir could be independence both from India and Pakistan. He mentioned this on returning to Delhi, and this perhaps led some people in India to be afraid that Sheikh Abdullah might be planning to enter on his own relations with Washington." Later, the *Times of India* reported that Adlai Stevenson had disclosed in a statement handed over to the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi that Sheikh Abdullah made a "casual suggestion" to him "that an independent status might be an alternative solution." He told pressmen in Srinagar :

"An imposed and impetuous solution for Kashmir is no solution, for it is the Kashmiris whose interests should come paramount " Immediately after his meeting with Stevenson, Sheikh Abdullah called a party meeting and confided to them that he had shifted from his earlier stand, viz., limited accession with India. On May 18, he placed before the Working Committee the plan of 'independent Kashmir' which was rejected. After this he started rousing the people with communal sentiments against accession to India. On June 26, he told National Conference workers : "We have made it clear that Kashmir will refuse to become an appendage of India or Pakishtan, that the basis of Indo-Kashmir relationship has been shaken." On Martyrs' Day, July 13, 1953 he delivered a major speech. Richard S. Leach of the U.S. Embassy was present. Sheikh Saheb observed : "Kashmir's position is such that it should have the sympathy of both India and Pakistan. Therefore, we have to seek such a solution, which will be honourable to Kashmir and acceptable to these countries. It is not necessary that our state should become an appendage of either India or Pakistan"..."I do not want unity between Kashmir and India alone, but between Kashmir, India and Pakistan."

Dulles visited India in May 1953. In a radio-television broadcast from Washington, before leaving, Dulles, among other things, remarked : "These countries cannot afford to waste their efforts quarrelling with each other and diverting their strength for possible use against each other.... That thought applies to the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kasmir...we tried tactfully but firmly to make clear that the U.S.A. as a friend of both would make more fruitful such economic aid as we render." Later, Manzur-ul Huq reported to the *Times of India* from Karachi : "Definite progress is reported to have been made towards a solution of the Indo-Pak dispute on Kashmir during the Dulles-Mohammad Ali talks yesterday, and today....U.S.A. is shortly likely to attempt a fresh approach to the solution of the Kashmir problem....No indication is however, available as to what form this solution might take : limited plebiscite, partition, or even trusteeship before plebiscite." Dr. Krishnalal Shridharani reported to

the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* from New Delhi on May 26, 1953, that a limited plebiscite, trusteeship, etc., are being mooted as possible solutions.

Robert Trumbull reported to the *New York Times* from New Delhi on July 5, 1953, that the new proposal for the "solution" of the Kashmir dispute envisaged a "special status for the Kashmir Valley, possibly independence guaranteed by both countries, and partition of the rest of the state along lines now occupied by the opposing armies under a cease-fire agreement. ...It is rumoured here that the U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, supported a solution of this nature for the long-standing quarrel...

"Sheikh Abdullah is said to lean towards an independent status, and this would solve many of his problems, both political and financial and thereby to be falling off."

Immediately after meeting John Foster Dulles, Pandit Nehru declared at a public meeting on May 26 (1953) that the more foreigners interfered in the Kashmir problem, the more complicated it became. The weekly *Message* of Delhi reported: "Dulles, during his visit to India and Pakistan had put forward a plan for a trizonal division of Kashmir, with a zone each going to Inida and Pakistan, the Valley being either "internationalized" for a certain period till a plebiscite was held under U.N. control or being ruled by a semi-independent government. A map illustrating the plan was published in the *New York Times* of July 5, 1953."

On July 31, 1953, Sheikh Abdullah spoke to a peasant audience at Ganderbal:

> "Both...India and Pakistan...are our neighbours and are situated on our borders. It is natural that the progress and betterment of Kashmir should be dependent on their goodwill. We should have the friendship of both. Only then can we live a life of honour. It will not auger well for the Kashmiri people to be unfriendly to India, or Pakistan, or both."

A large number of friends and sympathisers of the Kashmir people apart from Moulana Abul Kalam Azad tried to persuade Sheikh Saheb to take a broader view of the Kashmir question, in a period of the American drive for war and world

domination. This included a deputation from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India. But no one had any success. In fact he started a purge to get rid of his colleagues who opposed his stand for an independent status for Kashmir.

Sheikh Abdullah was put under arrest on August 9, 1953. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad took over as the Prime Minister in his place. On the 11th, the *New York Herald Tribune* observed in a leading article :

"The forcible overturn of the government of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullal in Kashmir is of concern far beyond the borders of that little state." Gordon Graham wrote in the *Christian Science Monitor* : "The recent dismissal and arrest of the Kashmir premier Sheikh Abdullah...means that any possibility of independence of Kashmir as a solution to the problem is practically eliminated. Sheikh Abdullah had been talking too often and too freely for Indian taste, about his country as the 'Switzerland of the East'—a neutral state....His habit of airing his independence ideas more freely with foreign visitors than with Indian or Kashmiris also involved him in accusations of connivance and support of foreign powers."

Pandit Nehru, reporting to Parliament observed : "...now a great deal has been said, much has been said about fareign interference in Kashmir. These kinds of charges are often made, and if there is a modicum of truth in them that is greatly exaggerated as expressed...it becomes a little difficult to deal with them. In a matter of this kind it is not easy for me to state every fact that may come to our knowledge, before the House, but broadly speaking, I would say in the course of the last few weeks, in the course of the last few months, and some time more, hard cases of this type of interference have come before us—individual interference, it would not be correct to call it governmental interference, but individuals have not behaved properly because again you must remember *the basic fact that Kashmir is a highly strategic area.*"

Ex-Ambassador Chester Bowles used greater finesse in white-washing the American conspiracy. In his book *An Ambassador Reports* he records : "When I was in Kashmir in the fall of 1952, some two-thirds of the officers on the cease-fire line were

Americans, and not all of them handled themselves with discretion. The last negotiator appointed by the U.N. was a distinguished American (Frank Graham). An administrator who was selected by the U.N. to take charge of the plebiscite, if and when it was conducted, was still another American, Admiral Chester Nimitz. Despite the hilh calibre of these men, and all the goodwill, the U.N. effort to achieve a Kashmir settlement inevitably took on the character of an American operation. In a situation where passions run high we have not only failed to achieve a settlement but have come in for sharp criticism."

The new government set up under Bakshi Ghulam Mohmmad was prompt in giving immediate relief to the people in the form of cheap food and readily available essential commodities—rice, sugar, cloth, fuel ; abolished the system of compulsory grain levy from the peasants, made education free at all levels, provided Rs 35 lakhs for rural credit, increased the purchase price of grain offered to the government, and generally showed great sensitivity to the needs of the people.

20. Pakistan Takes the Bait

It may be recalled that Pandit Nehru had warned the National Conference workers as early as in 1951 that he was prepared to "offer Kashmir to Pakistan on a silver platter...rather than have an 'independent' Kashmir on his border." Developments showed he meant every word of this declaration. He was not in the least complacent when Sheikh Abdullah was dismissed and put under arrest. He took no time to sound Mohammad Ali, Prime Minister of Pakistan on this. On August 20, 1953 the two Prime Ministers issued a joint statement. The statement asserted that Kashmir would not be allowed to become another Korea. The question of Kashmir's accession would be decided through a plebiscite...." It was decided that the Plebiscite Administrator should be appointed by the end of April 1954......With this purpose in view, committees of military and other experts should be appointed to advise the Prime Ministers. On the Plebiscite Administrator's formal appointment and induction into office by the J.&.K. government he will make such proposals as he thinks proper for preparations to be made for the holding of a fair and impartial plebiscite in the entire state and take such other steps as may be considered necessary therefor."

The Madras daily, *Hindu*, commented : "The happy feature of the joint declaration is that for the first time the future of Kashmir is sought to be decided without foreign intervention. We must beware of many elements here and abroad who are feeling frustrated at the happy turn of events. Such elements

are determined to create commotion and conflicts in order to disrupt the unity of the people."

The new policy implicit in the joint declaration did not have a safe passage in the Pakistan cabinet. As a result of an inner cabinet dispute the expected resignation of Admiral Nimitz from his post as Plebiscite Administrator was also withheld. Mohammad Ali repudiated the August agreement on September 21, 1954 and demanded that the plebiscite be held under the auspices of the U.N.O. Meanwhile, the U.S. started negotiations for a military agreement with Pakistan.

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad came out with the statement: "The move for a U.S.-Pakistan (Military) Pact has only confirmed American conspiracy in Kashmir, which was thoroughly exposed and foiled by the people of Kashmir in August last.... American policy (is)...trying to get a Formosa on the Indian sub-continent." It is well known that Formosa was the earlier name of Taiwan, where Chiang Kai Shek with his administration and remnants of the Koumintang army landed after having been routed on the Chinese mainland by the Chinese communist forces.

In December 1953, Vice-President Nixon visited Karachi, and in a press statement advocated military aid to Pakistan "as a counterforce to the confirmed neutralism of Jawaharlal Nehru's India." Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy, later Prime Minister of Pakistan, commented: "A military pact with the U.S.A. will mean a blow to our national independence and initiative."

While the Neutral Nations' Repatriation Commission for Korea was functioning, the U.S.A. did not take any irrevocable step in formalising military agreement with Pakistan. India, it may be recalled, had a key role in this Commission in deciding the question of repatriation of prisoners of war taken in the Korean fighting. The Commission concluded its work and was formally dissolved with effect from the midnight of February 21, 1954. Only a few hours after this, Pakistan submitted a request in Washington for military aid. On February 25, President Eisenhower announced that the request would be granted. Already before this the *New York Times* had reported a "sudden sharp deterioration in relations

between India and the U.S.A. as a result of American plans for Pakistan..."

The annual report of the General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress bitterly commented about this that "the synchronization of demilitarization in Korea with militarization in Pakistan brought to the Eastern mind the irresistible analogy of locusts swarming from one locality to another." India had been excluded from the Korean Political Conference through the pressure of the Americans, who had been keen to extend the war even to mainland China. Nehru, commenting on this, remarked : "...the countries of Asia, however weak they might be, do not propose to be ignored, do not propose to be by-passed, and certainly do not propose to be sat upon."

With the start of negotiations with Pakistan for military assistance, Robert Trumbull reported from Karachi : "...diplomats believe that Mr. Nehru's neutralist influence, which often has embarrassed the U.S. and its allies, would be lessened if an Asian power, outspokenly opposed to Communism, were to gain a position of greater prominence....Nehru is a good politician. He will be affected in his purpose by strength, decisive action, and people who can say 'No' with power to back it up."

Nixon might have been echoing the same thought when he observed : "Nehru...was contemptuous of flattery, but respectful of strength....American policy should be based not on any fear of angering Nehru." A year prior to this Vice Admiral Jerauld Wright had disclosed at a press conference in Karachi, on January 26, 1953, that he was there to see for himself where his forces would operate in case of emergency.

One year after this the *New York Times* reported : "Now the decision has been made that the importance of bringing in Pakistan in the defence of the Middle East is greater than the importance of preserving pleasant relations with Mr. Nehru.... Some experts feel that the sharp words spoken on the subject may in themselves do some good by separating the neutralist nations from the pro-Western nations in that part of the world."

The U.S.-Pakistan Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement with Pakistan was signed on May 19, 1954. Nehru branded the

military aid to Pakistan as "a form of intervention" in Asian affairs. He took strong exception to Robertson's statement that the U.S. must maintain a dominant military position in Asia. Nehru remarked : "Whatever the objectives may be... the countries of Asia do not accept this policy and do not propose to be dominated by any country for whatever purpose."

As if deliberately to furnish a contrast, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mohammad Ali, interviewed by the *U.S. News and World Report* declared that his country might invite "any friendly power, including America", to use the existing large airfields to help defend the region in times of emergency. Nrehu took a different view and warned : "When the door is opened once, even a little for this kind of thing...in course of time this door will become wide open under the pressure of developments arising from such a pact....When military aid comes in, the whole country becomes a base. It is not a question of an odd base here or there. It is the whole country which can be utilized for purposes laid down by other peoples and countries."

Even before the agreement was signed, the *New York Times* correspondent in Karachi had reported : "Actually Pakistan is more inclined to build her military strength as a bargaining factor in dealing with India on the Kashmir issue than as a defence against other countries, including the Soviet Union. This is a common admission privately expressed."

Years later, in 1963, Chou En Lai, interviewed by the *Associted Press of Pakistan*, said : "The leaders of Pakistan had assured me (Chou En Lai) in 1954 that Pakistan had joined the Western military alliances only to gain political and military ascendancy over India, and that Pakistan had no other motivation in joining the pacts...."

Several months later Robert Trumbull reported from Manila : "A militarily strong Pakistan would enfold neutralist India between two wings of the Moslem nation. It would give strength to the defences of the Khyber Pass on the west and could command the Bay of Bengal, and back up Burma on the east." The British Far East expert, Guy Wint, took a more perceptive view when he wrote : "Even the dispute over

Kashmir between Pakistan and Indiahad limited consequences. But recently a very severe test has been imposed on them. America, by offering Pakistan substantial military aid, which might bring it nearer to military equality with India, has opened up the possibility of a major divergence between Pakistan and India; since Pakistan, in taking the aid, will almost certainly be drawn into the American orbit, it is impossible to foresee exactly all the consequences if India and Pakistan finally part company, but they are bound to be grave. The agreements between America and Pakistan, and between Pakistan and Turkey, are the most important, internationally, in South Asia since the withdrawal by the British."

The *New York Times* reported on Appril 11, 1954 : "The end limits of the Middle East defence chain, Turkey and Pakistan, were forged a week ago when both countries announced a military alliance." Nixon wanted to go one step further and rope in Afghanistan also, being a Muslim country in the area. "The visit of Vice-President Nixon to the Afghan capital of Kabul last December (1953) was considered to have been for the express purpose of furthering a closer alliance between Afghanistan and Pakistan in the context of the Middle East defence chain now being forged." Nixon was, however, in for a shock. "The expected result has somehow eluded the Americans. The Afghan government protested against the military agreement between Parkistan and the U.S." It was a monarchy that furnished this rebuff to the imperialists.

After the signing of the U.S.-Pak military agreement the Government of India declared that the U.S. could no longer be considered as neutral in Kashmir, and therefore requested the Secretary General of the United Nations, who continued to be under American influence, to remove the U.S. observers from the Kashmir cease-fire line. The Secretary General... "agreed to replace U.S. observers when their terms expired... new ones to come from U.N. members who fought the communists in Korea."

One of the immediate consequences of Pakistan's military connection with U.S.A. was the weakening of what little democracy it enjoyed before. In 1954, the Governor General of

Pakistan, Ghulam Mohammed, had a plan to hand over power to General Ayub Khan, who had been appointed C-in-C in October 1951. Ghulam Mohammad asked Ayub Khan to "produce a constitution within three months." Ayub Khan has recorded his own reaction in these words : "Had I succumbed to the temptation, the course of history might well have been different. We would certainly not have had any army worth the name and the one stabilizing element in the whole situation would have been neutralized."

Ayub Khan felt immense satisfaction at the discovery that his views were shared by no less than the elder Anglophile statesman, H.H. the Aga Khan, who told him : "You have got Pakistan after great sacrifices (!) You do not want to lose it. But if the Parliamentary system is the one you are going to follow then you will lose Pakistan. I have called you to tell you that you will lose it this way, and that you are the one man who can save it."

Pakistan signed the neo-colonist peace treaty which the U.S.A. imposed on Japan, and which India refused to do. As soon as economic and technical assistance started flowing into Pakistan under the Mutual Security Programme of the U.S. Congress (1951), the U.S. Government imposed a ban on its trade with socialist countries. Thus it was deprived of those benefits which enabled India to register a big leap in developing the foundations of its economic self-reliance. The Communist Party of Pakistan was also outlawed. For the West, Pakistan was only a pawn on its strategic chessboard. To quote Truman : "Pakistan is one of the youngest nations but already progressive (!) and powerful. Its friendship for the West may become an important factor in giving stability to the Near East. At the same time Pakistan is a valuable ally in South Asia because of its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, and its control of land passes from Central Asia."

These perspectives were apparently shared by the Pakistan top brass. Ayub Khan, in his autobiography *Friends Not Masters* observes : "The equation between the U.S.A. and Pakistan has become one of close friendship and alliance. This equation was firmly established by the time I became President. I was certainly associated with those elements in it which had

a direct bearing on the defence services, but the essential content was determined by the political leaders. My own thinking at that time was that it was natural for the U.S. to be deeply interested in the welfare and safety of the smaller powers in Asia.... It was not unreasonable to assume that these small nations (Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Nepal, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and South Korea) would be looking for such friends as might help them in protecting themselves. Assuming that the U.S.A. too wanted to have an area of influence in Asia, it was logical for her to present herself as a natural friend to countries like Pakistan....The Moslem world occupied an area which was vital, strategically and economically and that was the reason why the U.S. and other Western countries thought it worth their while to befriend the Muslims...."

A few years later H.S. Suhrawardy, ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan, showed some awareness of the dangers to a country in a culture of curtailed democracy, which military alliance with the U.S. involved. Writing in the prestigious Journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1957, he observed : "In the past our Foreign Affairs undertakings have been in great degree the business of a few ministers sheltered by secrecy. The result has been a set of commitments in a legal sense, yet not sufficiently felt as commitments in the consciousness of the people themselves....

"The very secrecy with which our engagements have been entered into, the lack of thorough public airing in debate, has left them vulnerable to suspicion that they have somehow rendered us subservient and have drained away our autonomy."

Between 1954 and 1965 two billion dollars worth, officially speaking, of arms were passed on to the Pakistan army. Prof. Edward Mason of U.S.A. has a comment to offer in these words : "In many of the countries to which we extend foreign aid the army is the best organization in the country and frequently one of the most forward looking. In my own experience this is conspicuously so in Pakistan."

How forward looking the Pakistan top brass truly were, it did not take the world too long to realize.

An incisive observation made by Prof. Mason is : "The U.S. military assistance programme is increasingly aware of... possibilities...of strengthening of U.S. economic elements in closer contact." In Pakistan it caused a meteoric rise of twenty families. Ten years later the *Time* magazine wrote : "While Nehru's India preached neutralism, Pakistan eagerly joined every alliance in sight. It was an original member of CENTO, it belongs to SEATO, and would have joined NATO if it could have. Pakistan signed a bilateral defence treaty with the U.S.A. in 1954 and supplied the U.S. with the Peshawar airfield as a convenient base for U-2 spy planes flying over Russia....Once aligned with the U.S. marvellous things happened to Pakistan. Tanks, jet planes, new weapons, experts, food poured in. By last year Pakistan had received 1.5 billion dollars in military aid—almost $ 50 per person. Relations reached their peak in 1961, when Ayub Khan rode a wave of popularity through the U.S. Speaking before a joint session of Congress, he said : 'The only people who will stand by you in Asia are the people of Pakistan—provided you are prepared to stand by them."

However, Gen. White, in Senate Foreign Relations Committee—quoted by the Pakistani author Aslam Siddique—gave a more sober estimate of the military aid when he said : "What the Pakistanis are given under our strategic objectives are those forces which, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, are needed in Pakistan to support the U.S. objectives."

Another aspect of this policy, however, was that even without building any basic industry, Pakistan managed to accumulate a foreign debt of 9.5 billion dollars by 1983. In 1985 it paid over ane billion dollars to service it.

The path adopted by India was diametrically opposite to that of the one taken by Pakistan. It started when India strongly reacted to the abortive attempts to re-impose Dutch colonialism on Indonesia. It became more distinct when India recognized almost immediately the Peoples' Republic of China when it was set up in October 1949. It became clearer when India opposed the U.S. crossing the 38th parallel and thereby

carrying out an invasion of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Korea in 1951, under the fig leaf of United Nations' flag. It became sharper still when India worked for the end of the war in Korea, and exchange of prisoners of war after the cease-fire in July 1953. From this point onwards India's role in the struggle to save the world from a nuclear war started taking a concrete form. It was in this context that it took a vigorous stand on the question of the representation of the Peoples' Republic of China on the U.N. Security Council as one of its permanent members.

On February 22, 1954 Nehru speaking in the Lok Sabha, called for some kind of a cease-fire in Indo-China. A colonial war had been in progress there to subjugate the people, who had risen against the Japanese, and refused to submit to the French colonialists after the Japanese surrender. The French were facing defeat, when the United States joined the fray. Faring no better they threatened to use atomic bombs as they had threatened to do in Korea earlier. America felt compelled to participate in a conference on Indo-China, convened in Geneva, in which the People's Republic of China was also to participate. So on April 24, 1954 our Lok Sabha demanded that Indo-China be given priority on the agenda of the Geneva Conference.

On April 29, 1954 India signed an agreement with the People's Democratic Republic of China on the Tibet region. It was in the preamble to this treaty that the famous five principles of peaceful co-existence came to be enunciated and accepted, which came to be known as *Panchsheel*.

Chou En Lai visited India in June 1954, on the invitation of the Indian Government. In October of the same year, Nehru paid a return visit to China. Nehru spoke of a historic change in the relation of forces in Asia. Later in 1955, he paid an official visit to the Soviet Union. In October Nehru even raised the question of Germany, and called it "the centre-piece of the peace fabric."

During April 28-May 2, 1954, the Prime Ministers of India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma and Indonesia met in Colombo. They authorized the Prime Minister of Indonesia to explore

the possibility of convening a high-level conference of all Asian and African n ations.

The Conference met at Bandung in 1955, and was a landmark in p ost-war history. It was at this conference that Nehru and Nasser met, and later, together with Tito formally inaugurated the Non-Aligned Nations' Movement in 1961. In this way foundations were laid for a peace policy which saw endorsement by a hundred nations at the time of the 7th and 8th Non-Aligned Nations' Conference in 1983 and 1986 resp ectively. Even Pakistani rulers find it necessary to pay lip service to the same policy althougl they cut at its roots by their military collusion with the U.S.A.

In this whole chain of developments one fails to detect much that can compensate the ordinary American taxpayer, who ultimately bears the cost of piling mountains of arms all over the world. The worst cut of all for the imperialists was that the Indian government came close to the Soviet Union, which it had assiduously avoided in the earlier years. The Indian people got the chance to realize through their own experience that in the Soviet Union, they had a true and dependable friend; that without this friendship they often found themselves as sitting ducks in the face of imperialist aggression. The militarization of Pakistan was only a small part of a major war drive against the Socialist states system, along with subjugation of newly liberated states while formally retaining their sovereign status. Pakistan entered into a military agreement with Turkey and Iraq on Feb. 24, 1955, known as the Baghdad Pact. Britain with a pretence of modesty, entered later in September, 1955. The U.S. never tried to be a member, although it was the main force behind it. The Arabs were not, however, deceived by these manoeuvres. The League of Arab States promptly denounced this as an imperialist manoeuvre. Abdul Gammal Nasser remarked: "The Baghdad Pact represents foreign domination in the region and...through our opposition...(to the pact)...we aim at achieving true liberty, Arab solidarity and Arab Unity."

The Baghdad Pact was put to a severe strain when the Anglo-French-Israel armies invaded Egypt in order forcibly

to regain control over the Suez Canal, nationalized by Egypt through whose territory the Canal passes. The defeat of this war by Egypt, with the support of the Soviet Union, gave a tremendous set-back to the prestige of imperialism throughout the Middle East. Iraq destroyed its monarchy and became a republic. This ended the Baghdad Pact, only to be replaced later by CENTO involving the Shah of Iran. In Pakistan Ayub Khan assumed all power through a military coup in 1958, soon after the Iraqi revolution. He made himself a Field Marshal. In March 1959, Pakistan and Turkey signed a bilateral Agreement of Co-operation with the U.S.A.

The inherent advantage of the new situation from the U.S. point of view, have been expressed with lyrical emotion by a U.S. professor Rolph Braibanti : "...the latent power of martial law regulations compelled an attitude of caution and responsibility on the part of the public. This climate of moderation was enhanced by the absence of political parties and legislatures and by the pre-censorship of the press. The consequent stability and outward calm relieved the bureaucracy of the burden of irresponsible carping criticism and enabled the administration to operate somewhat more publicly without fear of vicious political attack....The attitude of President Ayub was an important determinant of this new atmosphere..."

Meanwhile Chinese-Indian relations came under strain.

In October 1950, Chinese troops entered Tibet. The way the Indian Government reacted was not liked by the Chinese, and they declared the Indian Government was "affected by foreign influences hostile to China in Tibet."

In 1956, China connected Tibet with Sinkiang by a highway passing through Aksai Chin. The Indian government came to know about the highway only when the Indian Embassy noticed celebrations in Peking (Beijing) on its completion. On July 10, 1958 the Chinese sent a note to Delhi protesting that "...reactionaries who fled from Tibet to Kalimpong...have been carrying on subversive activities against China's Tibet region...a malicious scheme of the U.S. imperialists to create tension in Asia and Africa..." They called on the Government

of India to "repress the subversive and disruptive activities against China's Tibet region." In 1959 there was a revolt against the Chinese in Tibet. The Dalai Lama, with a large entourage, made a mass migration to India, where they were welcomed by the government agencies. This embittered the relations between the two governments still more. Very soon the focus got shifted to frontier delimitation between China and India.

On October 20, 1962, when there was a direct confrontation between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. over the Cuban missiles, China made a mass invasion and occupied four out of five districts of the North-East Agency, now called Arunachal Pradesh. As soon as the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. came to an agreement and the war was averted, China withdrew her forces from the frontier areas occupied by it.

A direct result of this development was a new political understanding that took shape between China and Pakistan, on the common basis of hostility to India. Field Marshal Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan, declared in a B.B.C. interview: "The Sino-Pakistan friendship is, in fact, fulfilling the objectives of the western alliance." He could not have been more candid. He and the west had clearly understood the sudden U-turn the Chinese leaders had taken from anti-imperialist to objectively pro-imperialist positions. The Chinese attack of 1962 gave Sheikh Sahib an opportunity of initiating a new line of approach to the Indian government. He wrote a letter to Nehru which has never been published. In this letter he is understood to have dwelt at length on his anxiety about the 'danger from the North' which India and Pakistan must fight unitedly. He offered to start a dialogue with Pakistan along these lines, Kashmir serving as a bridge between the two countries. There was no public response to this overture. But late in 1963 Sheikh Saheb was released, and invited by Nehru to stay with him as an old friend. There some tentative ideas about a confederation appear to have been discussed, as a possible solution of the Kashmir question. It appears Nehru encouraged Sheikh Saheb to visit Pakistan and discuss his ideas with the leaders there. Sheikh Saheb went there but

found no positive response. He was still there when Nehru suddenly passed away, and he had to return without completing his 'mission'. The Pakistan paper *Dawn* reported: "Sheikh Abdullah's statements and his references to India's co-called secularism have caused a certain amount of disappointment among the public in general, and the intelligentsia in particular.

Ayub Khan, in his book, *Friends, Not Masters* accused Sheikh Saheb of coming to him with a plan for Confederation from Nehru. He wrote : "When Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg came to Pakistan in 1964, the two had brought the absurd proposal of Confederation between India, Pakistan and Kashmir. I told them plainly we should have nothing to do with it." Sheikh Saheb replied to Ayub Khan and released the letter to the press on September 1, 1967, denying Ayub Khan's story. According to him, Nehru left it to them to agree on any suitable formula.

In this new situation of convergence of Chinese and U.S. regional policies, Pakistan launched its secret 'Operation Gibraltar'. After all, Chinese expertise on guerilla warfare was now at their disposal. When their preparations were far advanced, and the post-Nehru problems were acutely tormenting the Indian state and society, with reaction on the offensive to change the course of its state policies from non-alignment and self-reliance, Pakistan launched its probing—some say diversionary—action in the marshy Rann of Kutch, on their southern border with Rajastan. Later came the real assault by "freedom fighters", army men without uniform, who penetrated the cease-fire line in a number of places under the cover of diversionary artillery fire.

Before launching the attack they sent emissaries with a large sum in cash to some public figures believed to have had some sympathy with their cause. They wanted them to convert the August 9 celebrations—the day when Sheikh Abdullah had been dismissed and imprisoned in 1953—into a general mass uprising against the Indian Army. However, the Kashmir leaders did not fall for this cynical ruse, and refused to be parties to a general massacre of ordinary innocent people,

only to further the adventurist invasion plans of those who were only tools of U.S. imperialism. But a Field Marshal strutting about like a Fuehrer did not attach much importance to the views of such small fry, and from August 5 sent in a few thousand trained army men into the western districts of the state to bring about a general anti-Indian upheaval. Curiously, it was Mohammad Din, a Gujjar of the Gulmarg area, who registered the first information report with the Security Personnel, who took several days to confirm that some serious developments were afoot. Confirmation came three or four days later, when a police party of about twenty was caught in an ambush and shot down almost on the western borders of Srinagar.

The *Baltimore Sun* reported : "The captured prisoners... said their followers around the state report no sign of the revolutionary movement which the Pakistani Government has said is operating in Indian Kashmir. Highly reliable sources here confirm Indian statements that the guerilla raids, which broke out here a week ago, are conducted by infiltrators from Pakistani territory. The number of raiders is far from certain. Independent sources are sceptical that they number as many as 2500, the official estimate here. Whatever their number, however, the raiders seem to be inflicting more damage than has yet been admitted by the government spokesmen. Although officially denied, the raiders are reported to have fired upon two Indian Army brigade headquarters and a battalion headquarters. There is evidence that the raiders are receiving some assistance from local residents. However, there is no sign here of an uprising. Despite an influx of refugees from nearby villages and raids on the outskirts of the city, Srinagar remains calm. There is no sign of tension between Muslims and Hindus, which would almost certainly accompay any uprising by Kashmiri Muslims."

The *Daily Telegraph* reported : "Whatever the basic rights or wrongs of the chronic Kashmir problem may be, Pakistan claim that the present armed conflict there is a purely internal rebellion against India stretches credulity a trifle far." The *New York Times* observed : "Reports from Pakistan that the

troubles in Indian-held Jammu and Kashmir are a popular revolt against Indian rule appear to be without foundation."

The *Baltimore Sun* reported : "Srinagar itself is relatively quiet despite the bustle of unusually heavy military traffic and stationing of armed guards at key intersections and installations. There is no evidence visible in or near the city to support reports from Pakistan of a popular uprising against India, nor of repressive measures against the population. Independent sources confirm Indian reports of the capture of arms and equipment left behind by the raiders of the sort issued only to regular soldiers. Indian sources say some of the equipment has Pakistani markings. Independent sources report the discovery of equipment, from which identification has been erased or which was manufactured without markings. Some flash-light batteries bearing Chinese identification have also been reported discovered. A government spokesman said in New Delhi that 21 policemen had been killed since the raids started."

Le Monde (Paris), writing under the caption 'Operation Gibraltar', reported : "It is hardly in doubt that the Pakistani side is eager to give much importance to an operation, which is described in Rawalpindi as a spontaneous rebellion by Kashmiris. But in fact there is extremely little chance of the radio station of the 'rebels' being really situated on the Indian side of the cease-fire line. It is more likely that if a Revolutionary Council and a Provisional Government were established, those may not be located except on the part of the territory in Pakistani hands since 1947. Everything leads one to think that Pakistani infiltrators in the Valley were probably aimed at starting a revolt by throwing the suburbs of Srinagar into trouble, which in reality is the centre of political activity in Kashmir. For the moment it seems that this undertaking, which recalls a great deal the American adventure in the 'Bay of Pigs', has not had immediate success. However, nothing indicates that the local population, in which the sight of blood always inspires healthy repulsion, is inclined to forget its traditional prudence."

The Manchester Guardian reported : "By far the most refreshing elements in the situation are the courage and

fortitude the Kashmiri people are showing. Although there has been considerable firing here, the city is by no means compliant. Many tourists in Kashmir have cut short their stay and returned home, but the plane which brought me to Srinagar contained among its passengers many tourists, mostly American matrons, who were surprised to see how normal is the life of the town. 'What we are faced with' say responsible people, 'is a naked invasion by Pakistan and not merely infiltration and subversion.' "

The Washington Post reported : "The lack of support from the strongest single organized group in Kashmir opposing Indian rule appears to have been the major factor accounting for the initial failure of the adventure. With the exception of Farooq's stronghold in the Rajveri Kadal area on the outskirts of Srinagar, the raiders so far reportedly have not found sustained mass support." The '*Frankfurter Allgemin Zeitung*' (West Germeny) reported : "Kashmir would have been torn open by a rebellion apparently directed and supported by Pakistan. Pakistan's interpretation of the freedom fighters, who, she says, have risen in the Indian part of Kashmir, can no longer be maintained since New Delhi has shown to the world Pakistani officers who have been taken prisoner."

On September 1st, a tank column of Pakistan army with air support crossed the international frontier in Jammu area. On September 6, the Indian army launched a three-pronged attack on west Pakistan. Cease-fire was brought about on September 22 by the U.N. Security Council.

U.S. military commentator Hanson Baldwin reported : "...a minimum of 200, perhaps as many as 300 tanks, of American model M-47 and M-48 Patton tanks had been lost by Pakistan." The *Washington Post* reported somewhat later : "Pakistan may have lost 225 tanks. This would still leaves 450 tanks of all grades in field formations and 350 more in workshops and depots."

When the war broke out, the Soviet Government showed its extreme concern and did everything to stop it. It was, however, a U.N. Security Council Resolution, followed by the visit of its Secretary General U. Thant to the subcontinent that enabled

an immediate cease-fire, with withdrawal of the respective armies to the pre-August 5 positions, to be accepted by the two parties. The Anglo-American draft of the resolution was designed to raise anew the issue of accession of Kashmir to India. This position was unacceptable to India. India accepted only the cease-fire without the linkage with the accession question. This made the cease-fire itself very precarious. At this stage the Soviet Premier Kosygin intervened, and persuaded Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India, and Field Marshal Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan to come to Tashkent for a conference to bring about a truce between the two countries. The outcome of the Conference was a document, the Tashkent Declaration, signed by the two leaders and witnessed. by Kosygin. It separated the three crucial points at issue—cease-fire, withdrawal to pre-August 5 position, and Kashmir—and presented them as independent of one another. The acceptance of the first two was not a necessary condition for accepting the third. About the Kashmir problem it merely recorded :

"They considered that the interests of peace in their region and particularly in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and, indeed, the interests of the peoples of India and Pakistan were not served by the continuance of tension between the two countries. It was against this background that Jammu and Kashmir were discussed, and each of the sides set forth its respective position." The Tashkent Declaration also promises that all disputes between India and Pakistan would be settled through peaceful negotiations, without resorting to arms; that all 'propaganda' directed against one another would be stopped; that an effort would be made to promote the development of friendly relations between the two countries; that steps would be taken to continue meetings both at the highest and at other levels on matters of direct concern to both countries..."

What must have been the cruellest cut of all for the Pentagon was the concluding part :

"The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan record their feelings of deep appreciation and gratitude to the leaders of the Soviet Union, the Soviet government and personally to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the

U.S.S.R. for their constructive, friendly and noble part in bringing about the present meeting, which has resulted in mutually satisfactory results...they invite the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. to witness their declaration."

For one in the situation of Field Marshal Ayub Khan, this was virtually signing his own death warrant. He did not stay long in power. As for the Tashkent Agreement, it was not allowed to be the historic milestone that it was. It was not implemented in full, and the democratic forces in Pakistan were too weak to prevent its sabotage.

In contrast to the attitude of the U.S.S.R., the Chinese Government gave an ultimatum to India, for absurd reasons, in the midst of the India-Pak war, on September 16 (1965). Obviously it was intended to boost the morale of the Pakistani forces. This provoked a comment from the Soviet ideologue Suslov : "The approach of the Chinese leaders to the choice of friends and allies is strange, to say the least. How is it possible, it may be asked, to abuse and slander the socialist countries and the communist parties and, at the same time, with the whole world watching, shower compliments on the reactionary regime in Pakistan ? That is simply beyond our understanding."

Obviously anti-imperialism had ceased to be an element in Chinese policies, and had been supplanted by narrow, nationalistic, big power chauvinism. Imperialism had found an ally from the most unexpected quarter. Very soon this blossomed into a strategic consensus between the U.S., China and Pakistan, which has been very much operative almost to this day.

21. Overturning the Applecart

India and Pakistan, both suffered heavily as a consequence of the war of 1965. Casualties in each case were estimated in the region of 10–20,000; cost in each case was believed to range 300–500 million dollars. Yet neither side could boast of a clear victory. The impact on the people in the two countries, however, was not identical.

At the peak of his career in 1961 Ayub Khan riding high on a wave of popularity through the U.S. had told the U.S. Congress at a joint session : "The only people who will stand by you in Asia are the people of Pakistan—provided you in Asia are prepared to stand by them." At a later occasion, again, he had said : "We provide the manpower and you provide us the means to do the fighting."

In hoping for the establishment of this comradeship Ayub Khan's own feudal militaristic perceptions made it difficult for him to see the difference between a modern imperialist state and a feudal empire of olden days. He was, however, not the first third-world politician to fall into this trap. The people of Pakistan, brought up on such ideological input from their leaders, understandably, got a feeling of being let down, in the light of the actual performance of the U.S.A. during the war. The sophisticated notion that the imperialist intervention in Kashmir, Afghanistan, or even Pakistan, is intended to subjugate the whole sub-continent and beyond, to make the world safe for the exploitation by American finance capital, is much too complicated; and most people have little chance to grasp all the interconnections their ruling classes are anxions they should not.

However, the Pakistan rulers found it necessary to cover up their own discomfiture by appearing to distance themselves from the U.S. for a while. A new posture of equidistance from the U.S., the U.S.S.R. and China was adopted by them. Ayub Khan explaind it as the setting up of "bilateral equations with each one of them with the clear understanding that the nature and complexion of the equations should be such as to promote our mutual interest without adversely affecting the legitimate interests of third parties." No one of any consequence is known to have told him that this was a case of the tail wagging the dog unless this stance is based on solid anti-imperialism and a self-reliant economy.

China, however, got a chance to deepen its influence in Pakistan, and consolidate some gains from its break with the socialist world. This situation helped Z.A Bhutto to outshine his master, President Ayub, and gain the backing of the mass of the people disenchanted with pro-imperialist policies. China and Bhutto, both, were vociferous against the Tashkent Accord. Bhutto made use of the worst communal demagogy, inciting the people to fight a "thousand year war for Kashmir". This suited the plans of the Beijing leftists, who believed—or, so they claimed—that they were leading the world communist movement for 'instant' socialism in the face of resistance by Moscow "revisionists". Ayub Khan, however knew that China could not adequately replace the U.S. as the supplier of arms and funds for further adventures. After receiving a large gift of tanks, planes, ammunition and interest free loans from China he sacked Bhutto on June 18, 1966. This was interpreted as a signal to the Americans that their position of pre-eminence in Pakistan continued to be unshaken. So, from April 1967 onwards, the flow of American funds and arms was resumed along with what China could spare. This is, however, not to suggest that the U.S. had ever stopped the arms flow to Pakistan. For a couple of years 'emergency deliveries' had been arranged from stores in West Germany, ostensibly as gifts from the Muslim states of Iran and Turkey to their Muslim brothers in Pakistan. This ruse was probably calculated to help the American lobby in India, which was quite strong and active at that time, handicapped by U.S. open hostility to Indian.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi succeeded Lal Bahadur Shastri in January 1966. Lal Bahadur had died within hours of the signing of the Tashkent Accord. Early in 1967 she was re-elected after the fourth general election. The election revealed serious depletion of Congress influence in the country. From the time of the Chinese invasion in 1962, reaction in India had been gaining in strength. In fact the Big Business lobby had been discontended ever since the third five-year plan had come up for discussion. Now the economic crisis caused by the war was made much worse by the persistent drought of several years. Food shortage became very acute. For the U.S.A. it was a looked-for chance to bring India to its knees. The powerful American lobby, anti-Soviet and pro-West, continued to monopolize the leadership of the Indian National Congress in order to change its basic policies of non-alignment and economic self-reliance. They succeeded in luring the government to go in for a major devaluation of the rupee as the price of a large influx of American capital into the Indian economy. The ruse succeeded. The economic distress it generated was sought to be used to capture state power, with the help of the band of conservative Congress party bosses known as the 'Syndicate'. Hidden reserves of anti-imperialism, however, made possible the launching of a counter-offensive, which resulted in the expulsion of the 'Syndicate' from the Indian National Congress, and the election of V.V. Giri as the President of India. The victory was consolidated by the nationalization of 14 major Indian banks. American policies thereby suffered a major set-back in Asia.

In 1967 Pakistan signed an agreement with China for building two highways over the Karakoram - 'Silk Road' and 'Friendship Highway'—connecting Sinkiang with Pakistan, through the northern regions of J & K State under Pakistani occupation. The London *Economist* called the project a "grand design for military co-operation between Pakistan and China". About the same time China was also forming close relations with the Shah of Iran.

During the years immediately after the Tashkent Accord, revelations were made in the indirectly elected Pakistan National Assembly that 22 Pakistani families had come to possess about

85 per cent of all the assets in the country; that they were masters of banks, big industries and insurance companies in Pakistan. Though emigre capital that came at partition, was the dominant element in these concerns, Ayub Khan's son was given out to be as one of the new tycoons. The Pakistan Army was in bad shape because of the war, failure of the monsoons, and the new hectic re-armament drive. Widespread discontent broke out in 1968, not only in towns but also in the countryside. Ayub Khan's 'green revolution' had created a new crop of the landless and the destitute in the villages. The situation continued to worsen.

Dissatisfaction in East Pakistan had come into the open as early as in 1952. The Pakistan Government had been forced to recognize Bangla along with Urdu as the official languages of Pakistan. During the 1954 elections, a United Front of Bengali parties wiped out the Muslim League as a political force in East Pakistan. Soon after, a dictatorship was imposed on the province. In 1966 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman formulated his famous six points, demanding a democratic federal structure for Pakistan guaranteeing maximum autonomy for the federal constituents. Ayub Khan visited Dacca, and, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, threatened : "The country would accept the challenge and the consequences of a civil war if one is forced upon it." 30,:00 East Bengalis were jailed between 6th and 9th June, 1966. The Agartala Conspiracy Case was launched to implicate Sheikh Mujib in the supposed conspiracy as an agent of the Indian government to bring about the severance of East Bengal from Pakistan. This accentuated the bitterness between the two wings still more.

The Soviet Union did all it could to save the Tashkent spirit. In March, 1966 it made clear to the government of Pakistan that in view of its attitude to the Tashkent Accord it should not count on Soviet support in the Security Council if it raised the Kashmir question again there. Such a possibility had been mooted by some Pakistani leaders including Zafarullah Khan as a justification for the Tashkent Accord. In other ways also it tried to focus the attention of Pakistan on constructive national developmental activities. In April

1968, Kosygin visited Pakistan and announced a Soviet loan of $ 400 million on easy terms for the construction, with Soviet help, of Kalabagh Steel Mills and Rooper Atomic Power Station. On July 29, 1968 the U.S.S.R. and Pakistan signed an agrement for the delivery of Soviet machinery and equipment worth 67 million dollars, and also a five-year trade pact. With all this the progressive forces in Pakistan proved to be too weak to sustain these initiatives. The ruling circles proved to be incorrigible, and continued to serve as surrogates of American imperialism.

The discontent in Pakistan against the Ayub dictatorship continued to increase. Bhutto organized the Pakistan Peoples Party (P.P.P.) on December 1, 1967 on the basis of the slogan: "Abolish capitalism and introduce Islamic Socialism." He made the fullest use of the discontent to build his own political influence. The real left was too weak, confused and divided – largely because of the novel theories of Beijing leaders to give leadership and direction to the discontent. The government were forced to lift the emergency in February, 1969. But the mass demonstrations and strikes remained unabated. On March 22, 1969 the British paper, *Guardian*, reported that "Pakistan was nearer to disintegration." On March 25, Ayub Khan was forced to abdicate and hand over power to Gen. Yahya Khan, who imposed martial law forthwith. Yahya Khan tried to control the situation by promising free elections throughout Pakistan, and concessions to students, workers and peasants. Strikes were mostly withdrawn and Dacca University opened after a long interval of closure. A ban was, however, placed on the exchange of all printed material with India. Commercial, economic and cultural relations had been severed much earlier. Z.A. Bhutto wanted the Tashkent Declaration to be formally repudiated, and an 'Algeria type' struggle initiated for acquiring Kashmir.

On November 28, 1969, Yahya Khan announced his agreement on 12 points, which included the commitment to have a general election based on adult suffrage in October 1970. A presidential announcement on March 28, 1970 decreed that the National Assembly of Pakistan to be elected would have 313 members, of which 169 seats would be from East Pakistan,

including 7 reserved for women to be filled in after the election. 144 seats were to be from West Pakistan, including 6 reserved for women to be filled in after the election. Thus 300 seats were to be filled in through the election in October, 1970, of which 162 would be from the Eastern Wing and 138 from the Western Wing. As a result of the election held, the Awami League, led by Sheikh Mujib, secured 160 out of the 162 seats from Eastern Pakistan. Z.A. Bhutto, leader of the P.P.P. won 81 out of the 138 seats for West Pakistan.

The London *Times* correspondent Hazelhurst commented on December 9, 1976 that the only common item in the programmes of Sheikh Mujib, leader of the Awami League and Z.A. Bhutto, leader of the P.P.P., was their commitment to secure the withdrawal of Pakistan from CENTO and SEATO.

The first meeting of the newly elected National Assembly was called for March 3, 1971 in Dacca. But Z.A. Bhutto refused to attend unless Sheikh Mujib changed his whole approach before the Assembly met, that is, unless he gave up his six points on which he and his party had based their election appeal. The first meeting of the Assembly was postponed indefinitely. On February 20 Yahya Khan and Z.A. Bhutto agreed that Pakistan was faced with a serious crisis. On the first of March the convening of the National Assembly was again postponed. Bhutto had threatened disorder in West Pakistan unless the postponement was announced. Mujib, in protest, called for a *hartal* in East Pakistan on March 2. The army was called out. Dacca and several other towns in East Bengal were placed under curfew for ten hours. The daily "Ittefaq" reported sixty deaths in Dacca alone. By March 5 over 300 were reported killed, and more than 2000 injured. On the 6th of March it was announced that the National Assembly would meet on the 25th of March. On the same day, however, Gen. Tikka Khan, already well known for his ruthlessness, was appointed governor of East Pakistan. On March 7, Mujib ordered East Pakistan officials to obey him self, and asked people not to pay revenue to the government. Colleges, schools and courts were to remain closed. On March 11, unfurling the future flag of Bangladesh, Mujib asked U.N.O. to intervene. On March 14,

Bhutto demanded that power in West Pakistan be transferred to him.

On March 15, Yahya Khan visited Dacca. But within hours of his arrival Mujib announced that he had taken power in his own hands, and accordingly issued 35 directives from the new regime.

On March 21, Bhutto also arrived in Dacca.

On March 22, it was reported that Pakistan Government were using the British base in Gun (Maldives) for the transport of military reinforcements to East Pakistan. The convening of the National Assembly was put off again. On March 23, Pakistan Day was celebrated. The Awami League put up a parade of its volunteer organization, the Bangladesh Corps, in Pultan Maidan in Dacca, and Sheikh Mujib unfurled the Bangladesh Flag. He also gave a call for a "hartal" on March 27 to protest against the firings on the people. On the 25th March Yayha Khan left Dacca for West Pakistan. The same day in the night Sheikh Mujib and many of his workers were put under arrest. An offensive was launched to suppress the uprising. On March 26, an independent Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh was proclaimed. Reg. Prentice of the British Parliamentary delegation reported in the *New Statesman* of July 16, 1971 : "...not only had the army committed widespread killing and violence in the March-April period, but it still continued rape, burning of houses, and villages."

On April 3, President Podgorny of the U.S.S.R. sent a message to the Pakistani President asking for the ending of bloodshed and repression in East Pakistan. Bruce Douglas Mann, a British M.P. remarked that Pakistan troops had been creating a Mai Lai every day in East Pakistan. Mai Lai refers to a particular instance of American fascist brutality in Viet Nam, which was condemned all over the world. On April 10, a government of the independent Republic of Bangladesh was announced with Tajud-Din as its Prime Minister and Nazarul Islam as the President.

Henry Kissinger, Security Adviser to President Nixon, visited New Delhi on July 6 and 7, just prior to his secret Beijing visit on July 9 and 11. He had warned the Indian Ambassador in the U.S.A. that "in case China assists Pakistan

in a war with India, New Delhi should not count on U.S. support". On July 31 the U.S.A. again warned India—which was getting deeply involved in the Pakistan crisis because of the influx of refugees from East Bengal—that if by chance India intervened in East Bengal it would have to pay heavily for it. On August 9, 1971 the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation was signed. The *Pakistan Times* called it "a deliberate move to neutralize China". The *Washington Post* of 10th August called it "a passionate Indian reaction to the American support for Pakistan". The *Daily Telegraph* of October 29 reported that the "immense cost Gandhi of supporting millions of Pakistan refugees had brought India to the brink of economic crisis. On November 4, Indira visited the U.S. to inform the Administration of the troubled situation in the Indian sub-continent. After a two-day visit she returned without any joint communique being issued.

Bhutto visited Beijing on November 5, 1971. On November 23 the *Manchester Guardian* reported that war between India and Pakistan seemed imminent.

Pakistan declared an emergency on November 23 and started general mobilisation. On November 25, Gen. Yahya Khan declared : "Pakistan...was on the point of no return." Lt. Gen A.A.K. Niazi told foreign correspondents on November 30 that "there was now a state of total war with India".

On December 2, the U.S.A. suspended arms shipments ordered by India worth 2 million dollars. On the same day Pakistani Sabre jets strafed Agartala in Tripura. On the 3rd of December the Pakistani air force made an all out attack on many Indian airfields in the East as well as the West. The U.S. cancelled export licences for the supply of military equipment to India worth 11.3 million dollars.

On December 6, India recognized the Republic of Bangladesh and formed a joint military command with it for operations in East Bengal. Senator Kennedy called these developments bankruptcy of U.S. Pakistan policy. On Dec. 11 paratroops were dropped on Dacca. The battle for Dacca began on Dec. 12. On the same day the nuclear aircraft-carrier 'Enterprise' entered the Malacca Strait, at the head of a flotilla of naval ships of the U.S. 7th Fleet in the Pacific.

The British journalist Alastair Lamb claims to have documentary evidence to prove that the U.S.A. and China had entered into an agreement to make a joint armed move against India. The *Washington Post* of 10th January reported that Beijing directed its ambassador to Islamabad to assure Yahya Khan that "within 72 hours the Chinese army will move towards the border."

On December 13 the U.S. flotilla started moving from Malacca towards the Bay of Bengal. Mrs. Gandhi was reported to have discussed the situation with V. Kuznetsov, First Deputy P.M. of the U.S.S.R., who was all the time present in New Delhi during those critical days. On the same day the U.S. resolution in the Security Council was vetoed by the U.S.S.R. two times. 3 R.A.F. aircraft and Canadian C-130 planes evacuated several hundred foreigners from Dacca on the same day. The Americans were also offered similar facilities to evacuate their citizens, by the Indian government, but they did not want to avail of them. The U.S.S.R. issued a statement that the movement of the aircraft-carrier 'Enterprise' ...was use of "gross blackmail and pressure against India in violation of the U.N. Charter." The Indian ambassador in the U.S.A. accused the Government of the U.S.A. of "gun-boat diplomacy."

The *London Times* reported on December 15 that Mrs. Gandhi was told by Kuznetsov that the U.S. and China had assured the U.S.S.R. that they would not interfere to counter the Indian offensive in the eastern wing. According to the American columnist Jack "Anderson, in the *Daily Telegraph* of 10th January 1972,.... American Intelligence had reported that the Soviet Ambassador N. Pegov had given 'great secret assurances' to Madam Gandhi that the Soviet Ocean Fleet would not allow the U.S. 7th Fleet to intervene in the war... that if China attacked across the Himalayas...the U.S.S.R. would act in Sinking...."

On 15th of December, the British newspaper *Sun* editorially advised Pakistani troops to surrender on December 16—already demanded by Gen. Manekashaw as "there is no reason why thousands of encircled Pakistani troops should be cut slowly to pieces." On 16th of December, 1971, Lt. Gen. Niazi surrendered

to Lt. Gen. Aurora. 74000 military personnel and 16000 civilians and their families surrendered to the Joint Indo-Bangladesh Army Command. On December 17, India declared a unilateral cease-fire on the western front with effect from 2000 hrs. In this way has Lord Mountbatten's prediction that East Pakistan would be cut off from Pakistan in a quarter of a century, been proved correct. However, for Chou En Lai "the Fall of Dacca...was (only) the starting point of endless strife on the South Asian sub-continent"—an expression of the Maoist perception of the situation.

Sheikh Mujib was freed from a Pakistani jail on December 22. On January 10 he landed at the Palam airport on his way from London to Dacca. In a speech at Dacca he accused Pakistani troops of having killed 3 million innocent people, of burning 30 per cent of the houses, damaging godowns and looting villages, and raping 4000 women.

Nixon visited Beijing, and in a joint communique with Chou En Lai on February 27, 1972 urged India and Pakistan to withdraw their troops from Jammu and Kashmir, and continue the cease-fire as directed by the U.N. Security Council resolution of December 21, 1971. Meanwhile Yahya Khan handed over power to Bhutto on December 20, 1971 and quitted the scene alongwith seven top military officers.

Parliamentary elections were held in India in March 1972, and on the 14th of March, Indira Gandhi was returned to Parliament with a two thirds majority. On the same day the Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin was reported to have offered his good offices for bringing about a political settlement between India and Pakistan. On March 15 Bhutto was reported to have told a delegation of Indian journalists visiting him that Pakistan was not in a position to pursue the policy of confrontation, that it wanted consultation and negotiation on the Kashmir question, that it was up to the people of Kashmir to fight for self-determination, that the people of the sub-continent wanted "to turn their backs on the past animosities and desired peace... people desired to improve their economic condition".

On March 16 Bhutto paid a three-day visit to Moscow.

On March 15 Mrs. Gandhi had already written to Kosygin suggesting a meeting of the Indian and Pakistani officials to

prepare the ground for an Indo-Pakistani summit. On March 30 Bhutto expressed his desire to resume diplomatic ties with India. On April 6, Mrs. Gandhi wrote to Bhutto proposing talks between the two countries for a durable peace in the sub-continent.

On April 14, Z.A. Bhutto was unanimously elected President of Pakistan by the National Assembly. Talks between India and Pakistan were held at Simla from June 28 to July 2, 1972, when an agreement was signed by the two leaders. This agreement came into force from August 4, 1972, after having been approved by the Indian Parliament as well as the National Assembly of Pakistan. Among its provisions are the following two clauses :

> I. (ii) That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation, and both shall prevent the organization, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations....

> IV. (ii) In Jammu and Kashmir the line of control resulting from the cease-fire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertook to refrain from the threat of the use of force in violation of this line.

The Kashmir Plebiscite Front leaders took no time to grasp the significance of the two articles in the Simla Agreement quoted above. Mirza Afzal Beg, President of the Front, urged all the people of Kashmir to extend their whole-hearted support to the agreement.

On July 18, 1974 Sheikh Abdullah addressed a mammoth public meeting in the Srinagar Red Square, and amidst thunderous cheers declared that the people of the state had rejected

the two-nation theory way back in 1944; that the lofty principles of secularism, socialism, and democracy embodied in the programme of New Kashmir on which the entire edifice of the peoples' movement in the state stood, could thrive and flourish only in India. Kashmir had nothing in common with Pakistan—a country created and based on the cult of hate. Sheikh Abdullah dwelt at length on the miserable lot of the Kashmiris stranded on the other side of the cease-fire line. They, according to him, were living in a state of agony, torture and destitution. He also predicted that Pakistan-occupied Kashmir would surely be liberated from the illegal occupation of Pakistan. In the same speech Sheikh Saheb also attacked the Jamaat-i-*Islami* as being a fascist organization preaching dogmas which were the very anti-thesis of the precepts and teachings of Islam.

Negotiations had already started between Mirza Afzal Beg and G. Parthasarthy, the latter representing the Government of India. These negotiations were long drawn-out. Ultimately an agreement was signed on November 13, 1974 with the blessings of Sheikh Abdullah who again assumed the Chief-Ministership of the state soon after.

It was on February 24, 1975 that Indira Gandhi announced in the Lok Sabha that an accord had been reached with the Kashmir leaders. She said:

"The agreed conclusions have been formulated within the framework of the Constitution of India. The constitutional relationship between the State of J & K and the Union will continue as it has been, and the extension of further provisions of the Constitution to the state will continue to be governed by the procedure prescribed in Article 370 (of the Indian Constitution). There will be no weakening of the ties which exist between the Union of India and the constituent units, of which the state of J & K is one. The existence of the jurisdiction of the Centre to deal with activities directed towards questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, or bringiing about cession, or secession of any part of the territory of India from the Union will also continue.

"It has been agreed that any amendments of the Constitution of the state in certain specific matters of importance will

not become effective unless the assent of the President is obtained. The agreed conclusions seek to reassure the state that in case the state government comes up with any proposal to change any Central law made after 1953 on matters in the concurrent list such as social welfare, procedural laws and the like, the grant of assent to the bill will be sympathetically considered."

The provision in Article 132 (2) enabling the Supreme Court to grant special leave on the refusal of a certificate by the State's High Court would not apply to Kashmir. "The State Constituent Assembly, which completed its work in 1956 did not suggest detention or modification of Article 370, and this position was confirmed by the Supreme Court in 1970". Sheikh Abdullah, commenting on the Agreement, remarked : "Basically what has been achieved is a re-establishment of trust and confidence born out of shared ideals and common objectives of the kind which was there all through until 1953".

The London *Times* commented : "The bulging file on a problem that surfaced nearly thirty years back will be closed and the U.N. will see the end of the long dispute with which it was saddled."

The Plebiscite Front Organization was dissolved officially on May 9, 1975.

After the Simla Agreement Z.A. Bhutto opened a new phase in the governance of Pakistan. He came to power in December 1971 because he was the only politician with a standing among the people to whom the Army would be prepared to hand over power when it had lost face with the people. Even the Americans were unable to sponsor any other candidate at that point of time. Now Bhutto set about not only bringing about order in the chaos around him, but also building himself an impregnable base among the people, which in course of time no one in Pakistan would be able to challenge. So he took some bold steps in the interests of the common people.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was by training a lawyer like Mohammed Ali Jinnah, brilliant and with an agile mind. But in contrast to the latter, in his thinking modes he was supple

to a fault. He could beat the worst fanatic in demagogy, and have no compunction in crushing a religious sect disfavoured by the Establishment. At the same time he was not allergic to liberal views of any sort. His capacity for populism in politics had no limits. A landed aristocrat by birth he called himself an Islamic Socialist, and popularized the slogans of *Roti Kapra aur Makan* (bread, clothes and shelter) as the right of every Pakistani. He had preached for years with great fervour "a thousand year war for Kashmir". Yet he had no difficulty in accepting the 'line of control as on December 17, 1971' as the *de facto* frontier of J & K state when he sensed a significant change in the situation of Pakistan and the mood of its masses.

Bhutto started extensive nationalization, and took control of 31 industries, banks and insurance companies belonging to the upstart 22 monopoly houses, which had mushroomed in Pakistan. From 7 per cent in 1971, the state controlled investment in Pakistan rose to 71 per cent by 1976 as a result of Bhutto's policies. But he did not touch foreign investments. His denunciations of imperialism were frequent, but he never said anything concrete against the U.S.A., the leading imperialist power of the world.

Bhutto started extensive land reforms. 4.1 million acres were taken away from the landlords within five years. Of these, five lakh acres were taken wlthout compensation, and distributed free among poor peasants. But far from breaking the back of the landlord power in Pakistan, even after these reforms 10 per cent of them still managed to own 42 per cent of the available agricultural land. In this way he created irreconcilable enemies against himself without first making them sufficiently harmless. He recognized May Day, but had no hesitation in shooting down workers in Karachi and elsewhere. He gave Pakistan in 1973 the best constitution it has ever had. This constitution seeks to "Eliminate all forms of exploitation and the gradual fulfilment of the fundamental principle : "From each according to his ability ; to each according to work." But he at the same time dismissed the elected provincial government of Baluchistan, and unleashed his army there for

years under Gen. Tikka Khan, who came to be called the "Bomber of Baluchistan". Thousands of Baluchis left their homes to hide in inaccessible mountains. No Baluch patriot will ever forget the anguished cry of Nauroz Khan and Bawal Khan, Baluch leaders, who were cheated with assurances till they surrendered and were then hanged.

"Please stop fighting, we swear by Allah that we will fulfil your demands."

"Let us die with the *Quran* in our hands, because they (*i.e.* the Pakistan army officers) had promised to us with the *Quran* in their hands".

Nor was the treatment of Pukhtoons any better. Bhutto knew all about using 'street power against the state power' and vice versa. In the Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi, opposition leaders were subjected to uninhibited murderous attacks. Many a politically inconvenient figure was done away with. This included Dr. Nazir, son of the prominent Baluch leader Ataullah Mengal.

With this chaotic track record, once the Americans decided that Bhutto was a liability, his enemies had no difficulty in creating the situation through their surrogates in which the Army took over power, and arranged his judicial murder on the gallows.

Once Zia-ul Huq, Chief of the Army Staff, took over power (1977) it did not take long for him to hand over 37 major industries back into private hands. Emigre capital, which had left Pakistan during Bhutto's presidency, came back. Foreign multinationals acquired fresh strength. Oil found in Dhodak was handed over to the Abidi-Arab group after suspending Dr. Sadiq from the Ministry of Natural Resources in June 1978. He had been advocating its retention in the public sector. Similar disposal was made of the Badr oil fields. Despite all the American "aid" the foreign debt of Pakistan at the end of 1985, exceeded 14 billion dollars, i.e., more than half that of India at that time. Its annual servicing cost exceeded one billion dollars. The most serious 'cost' which Pakistan has been paying is the hazard involved in allowing its territory to be used for American aggression on Afghanistan, through a long-drawn-out undeclared war merely for the sake of shoring

up American strategic interests. This major development in the area needs some elucidation.

In 1973, King Zahir Shah was overthrown, and Daud Khan took over power with the full support of the leftists organised in the Peoples' Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA): In January 1977, he got himself elected as the President. He had already been distancing himself from the leftists, and now started actively collaborating with the C.I.A. and the Shah of Iran. Assassinations of PDPA leaders and workers were organised. This led to huge anti-government demonstrations. At one point practically the whole of the left leadership were trapped. Before they could be done away with, an uprising overthrew Daud, and the PDPA took over power, and formed a government on April 27, 1978, under the leadership of Noor Mohammad Taraki, General Secretary of the PDPA. This whole operation cost only 73 lives, and these were mostly Daud's personal guards. Only 25 people, including Daud's Minister of the Interior, were put under arrest.

The new revolutionary government took no time in giving relief to the people, providing essential commodities, removing debt burdens, looking after working people, the youth and the unemployed, and recognizing the equality of the sexes. The property of the king and the princes was confiscated. All the exploiters tried to slip away to Pakistan and Iran, where the C.I.A. got busy organizing them for sabotage and intervention. Within months, counter-revolutionary bands were already active, committing sabotage, arson and murder in Afghanistan. The Pakistan weekly *Millat* wrote in its issue of July 4, 1979 : "The C.I.A., drawn out of Iran by the revolution – the Shah of Iran was also overthrown in February, 1979—has moved its headquarters to Pakistan from Iran in order to control the course of events in Afghanistan and Iran. The increased collaboration of the C.I.A. with the Pakistani press is connected with the plans of U.S. imperialism and of the local reactionary circles to employ the counter-revolutionary Afghan gangs for exerting constant pressure on the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. The flood of anti-Soviet and anti-Afghan material in the Pakistani press is designed to conceal the truth."

While all this was going on the American educated Hafizullah Amin, one of the PDPA leaders, managed to play upon the naivete and the inexperience of younger political workers anxious to achieve a socialist society at once, and got control of the PDPA party. He lost no time in weeding out the more experienced cadres, and by March 1979, managed to take up the post of the Prime Minister. He got Noor Mohammad Taraki arrested, and then murdered, and himself took over the General Secretaryship of the Party. His whole behaviour was that of an agent provocateur, while pretending to be building a socialist society in sixteen months. This suited ideally the plans of world reaction for organising armed bands on a large scale in Pakistan, and to some extent in Iran. Befoīe the worst could take place the healthy and mature cadres of the PDPA reorganized themselves and took over power on December 27, 1979, overthrowing Amin and his followers. They also invoked the Friendship Treaty signed a year earlier with the Soviet Union to ask for Soviet help in guarding the frontiers of Afghanistan from invasion from outside. Such a request had been made several times during the twenty months since the April revolution. A contingent of Soviet armed forces entered Afghanistan on December 29, 1979, and all hopes of the counter-revolutionaries came to nothing. The new government under Babrak Karmal included several prominent non-party people, and reconstruction of a new Afghanistan started in right earnest. How much success has been achieved can be gauged by the figures about Afghan trade and industry avial-able in internationally known journals. Rates of growth achieved in education, industry and agriculture are such as any developing country might feel proud of. The result is that on January 15, 1987 the new government led by Dr. Najibullah was able to declare a unilateral cease-fire and a general amnesty to all the conspirators and saboteurs, with a chance offered to participate in the administration. Already about 50,000 emigres have taken advantage of the generous offer, and many others are negotiating. So imperialism is now faced with a new, dynamic Afghanistan even though it succeeded in delaying the blossoming of a New Kashmir.

APPENDICES

Workers' Charter

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1. Every citizen has the right to demand work from the State in accordance with his capacity of brain or hand.
2. Every citizen has the right to work consistent with his honour and self-respect in a free and democratic state, which postulates the abolition of all exploitation of man by man.
3. Every working citizen has the right to a higher standard of living than the mere subsistence level, and this is guaranteed to him by the norm of the National Plan.
4. Every worker has the right of association and expression through his own trade union.
5. Freedom of movement from occupation to occupation is guaranteed.
6. All dealings with individual worker and groups of workers to be done through Union representatives.
7. In cases of dispute, compulsory arbitration to be provided.
8. Every citizen worker shall do eight hours work a day.
9. Every citizen worker shall be paid weekly wages.
10. Every worker has the right to receive equal wages for equal work, without racial distinction or sex discrimination.

11. Every worker shall receive one fortnight's leave annually with pay in full and one day's holiday per week, also on full pay.
12. Every worker is entitled to insurance, under the heads of sickness, old age, accident, and in the case of women, maternity.
13. Every worker can give his best work to the State in the confidence that in the event of sudden death, his dependants will be provided for by a State Pensions Scheme.
14. Every worker shall have a healthy home in a healthy locality, with light and water facilities.
15. Abolition of the employment of children under the age of fifteen years is guaranteed.
16. Special protection of the woman worker as specified in the Women's Charter.
17. All recruitment of labour through Trade Unions.
18. Every worker has the right to cheap and speedy transport facilities.
19. Every worker shall have a right to free medical and nursing facilities in accordance with the National Health Plan.
20. Every worker has the right to recreation, with all cultural facilities.
21. Every worker has the right to education, not only of the three R's but with special application to his own trade or profession, up to the highest point of which he is capable. through the medium of the National Educational Plan.

[New Kashmir Programme 1944]

The Peasants' Charter

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1. Every peasant has a right to work on the land, unless he is provided with alternative and congenial work on equal conditions.

2. All land which at present belongs to the landlords will revert to the peasant, when social parasitism is abolished.

   During the transition period, before planned economy can come into full-swing, there should be a sharply progressive system of taxation on all unearned land incomes. Such taxation shall allow of no exemptions. During the intermediary period before the final abolition of the exploiting landlord, his profits from the land shall be rigorously curtailed, and a strict upper income limit fixed.

3. Every peasant family will be guaranteed a higher standard of living in accordance with the national norm.

4. The right of the peasant to maintenance from village produce will be recognised as the first claim on it.

5. All feudal dues, levies and forced labour to be completely abolished.

6. Rural indebtedness has been the milestone of the peasantry of the State. The peasant must be made completely debt-free. Wherever the borrower has payed off the original amount, there shall be no further

payment of interest. In the Planned Economy, the provision of agricultural credit will be the task of the State.

7. The peasant, in common with all other workers of the State, is entitled to all the benefits of social insurance.
8. The peasant in a planned economy will be protected against famine, flood, frost, crop pests, fire, and cattle or animal diseases.
9. The peasant shall have the benefits of modern scientific research applied to :
    - *a.* soil problems
    - *b.* planning of crops
    - *c.* production of green, bone and synthetic manures
    - *d.* irrigation development problems
    - *e.* drainage facilities against water-logging, stagnant water problems, including anti-malerial campaigns, protection on a village basis against the evils of a polluted water supply
    - *f.* anti-erosion measures
    - *g.* labour-saving agricultural impliments and machines
    - *h.* agricultural methods and efficiency to be taught to him through a network of teaching facilities, headed by agricultural experts. Special emphasis to be laid on quality production and grading
    - *i.* co-operative packing, storing and refrigeration facilities in State warehouses and barns, to prevent wastage of food crops
    - *j.* keeping and breeding of domestic animals
    - *k.* poultry farming
    - *l.* improved types of fodder
    - *m.* village sanitation.
10. Cheap and speedy transport facitilies to be provided for all peasants.
11. The peasant shall be provided with co-oprative marketing facilities to eliminate wastage of labour power.

12. The peasant shall be ensured the benefit of local forest products and freedom from harassment by forest officials.
13. The peasant shall have the right to free medical and nursing facilities under the Plan.
14. The peasant has the right to a clean, weather-proof and healthy home in a planned village with pure drinking water supply.
15. The peasant has a right to recreation, based on a village hall as an expression of a common village life, provided with a radio and facilities for indoor and outdoor sports.
16. The peasant has the right to education, not only in the three R's, but with special application to land and its problems, up to the highest point of which he is capable, through the medium of National Educational Plan.

Under this Charter of Rights, the poor and exploited peasant of Jammu and Kashmir State will attain his true and rightful stature as a happy and prosperous citizen of the beautiful and renowned country he inhabits.

[New Kashmir Programme 1944]

The Women's Charter

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference stands for the attainment by woman of her just and rightful place in society, and her co-operation in the mighty and responsible task of nation-building. To that end it will ensure to her the following rights :

1. *State and Political*

(*a*) Right to vote to all women over 18 in all elections.

(*b*) Right of election to all elective bodies.

(*c*) Right of consultation of women's representatives in all matters concerning women decided by elective bodies in the State.

(*d*) Right of entry into all State services.

In addition, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference is of the opinion that a special Women's department should be founded in the State for the examination and solution of particular women's problems, stressing those of the most backward and neglected women: the nomads, the women of Frontier areas, the boat women and so on.

2. *Economic*

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference realises that woman, even more than man, needs protection from economic exploitation; and that in prohibiting the use of women as a for n] bour, they are forwarding the interests of the men workers also. It also recognises women's biologic right to

protection from heavy labour, and her particular call on State aid while fulfilling the sacred function of motherhood. What it stands for may be summarised as follows.

(*a*) Women shall be given equal pay for equal work. Type, quality and efficiency of work to be the only factors considered when payment is made for it.

(*b*) Women may enter any profession or trade or do any kind of work of which she herself considers she is capable.

(*c*) To women industrial workers shall be given all the benefits of social insurance granted to men, and the right to rest and vacations, and in addition they shall be especially protected against

(*i*) night work

(*ii*) unduly heavy work, especially during pregnancy.

(*d*) All women, whether, in town or village, in Frontier areas, among nomad tribes, or living in boats shall be afforded the greatest help and protection in fulfilling their labour of motherhood. The care to consist of :

1. ante-natal treatment
2. medical arrangements for childbirth, either at home or in hospital,
   Special care for difficult cases,
3. adequate arrangements for nursing during the lying-in period,
4. extension of district nursing system
5. leave for working mothers, six weeks before child-birth and six weeks afterwards,
6. the provision of nurseries and kindergartens by all factories and concerns employing more than seven women workers,
7. leave to feed a suckling child for half an hour every four hours during the working period,
8. family allowance to be given to women with large families.

3. *Social*

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference recognises the family as the basic social unit, and affirms the right of

every Kashmiri child of the State to all State advantages. It demands :

(*a*) that the status of woman be protected by Law, and exemplary punishment be meted out to all guilty of the molestation of women,
(*b*) that all women of the State be protected against traffickers in women and children,
(*c*) that the economic and psychological causes of prostitution be examined by the State, and that an active policy of reclamation and education of all such women be pursued,
(*d*) a special study to be made of disabilities suffered by women of backward tribes and areas.

4. *Legal*

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference stands for woman's equality with man in the face of the law. It also stands for every citizen's right to marry according to his or her own religious rites, whether Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or of any other religion, subject only to State registration of the mariage. In the interests of all women it demands :

(*a*) every woman's right to consent to her own marriage
(*b*) the abolition of the dowry system and the selling of women in marriage,
(*c*) the right of divorce and alimony,
(*d*) that women be given equal rights and responsibilities in the upbringing of children, and the right of custody of children if the innocent party in divorce,
(*e*) the right of women to own and inherit property, this right not to be prejudiced by marriage,
(*f*) the right of special women lay-judges to be present during the trying of cases affecting women and children,
(*g*) The right to humane and intelligent treatment of women prisoners in jails, taking into account their psychological and biologic necessities.

5. *Educational*

Realising that educational facilities are essential and a pre-requisite of any large scale progress of women, the Jammu and

Kashmir National Conference calls for more intensive work and schemes for women's education based on the following:

(*a*) Compulsory free primary education for women. Travelling schools to be provided for nomad women, boat schools for boat women, and other special arrangements to be made for cther classes of women who find it impossible to attend ordinary schools.

(*b*) Equal educational rights and privileges in liberal and technical education, women's study to be encouraged by the grant of special scholarships at every stage.

(*c*) Separate colleges for women, liberal and technical and domestic, to be established. Women also to be given the right to join men's colleges.

(*d*) Recognition of the special needs of women in the drawing up of educational curriculums.

(*e*) Schemes for adult equcation among women to be put forward, these schmes to include not only the three R's. but also hygienic and elementary child welfare.

6. *Cultural*

In the future free and democratic State of Jammu and Kashmir, the National Conference looks forward to the time when women will take an active and honourable role in the development of the arts and sciences and the cultural life of the community. It calls for

(*a*) encouragement of women scholars and artists of all kinds;

(*b*) inclusion of women in the cultural services of the State

(*c*) encouragement of the mother-tongue;

(*d*) special provision for the cultural deve lopment of women in villages and remote areas.

[New Kashmir Programme, 1944]

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